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EARLY ORPHISM AND KINDRED RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS

BY MARTIN P. NILSSON

LUND UNIVERSITY, SWEDEN

ORPHISM is more famous and more debated than any other phenomenon of Greek religion. A central place in the stream of religious ideas is assigned to it, and it is regarded as the source of conceptions of the greatest importance in later times. A vast Orphic literature has existed since early times. Orphism was the first Greek religion to have sacred books, and this is perhaps the ultimate, if unconscious, reason why the scientific treatment of Orphism tends to disclose a system of Orphic doctrines. This is true of Lobeck's masterly work and of the impressive chapter on Orphism in Rohde's *Psyche* which more than anything determined the views of recent scholars. It is also true of the very ingeniously written and admirably constructed parts of Miss Harrison's *Prolegomena* which are devoted to Orphism; her treatment is much more copious than Rohde's and she covers a much wider field.¹

¹ A full bibliography of modern works on Orphism to the year 1922 is found in Kern, *Orphicorum Fragmenta*, pp. 345. I add a list of books and papers published after this year; cp. Pauly-Wissowa's *Realenc. der class. Altertumswissenschaft*, xvi, p. 1289.

R. Eisler, *Orphisch-dionysische Mysteriengedanken in der christlichen Antike* (Vorträge der Bibliothek Warburg, 1922-23, II. Teil), Leipzig, 1925.

A. B. Cook, *Zeus*, ii, 2, Cambridge, 1925, App. G, pp. 1019, *Orphic Theogonies and the Cosmic Egg*.

A. Boulanger, *Orphée, rapports de l'orphisme et du christianisme*, Paris, 1925.

F. M. Cornford in the *Cambridge Ancient History*, iv, 1926, pp. 532.

O. Kern, *Die Religion der Griechen*, Berlin, i, 1926, ii, 1935.

C. C. van Essen, *Did Orphic influence on Etruscan tomb paintings exist?* Amsterdam, 1927.

O. Kern, *Die griechischen Mysterien der klassischen Zeit*, Berlin, 1927.

V. D. Macchiore, *La catabasi orfica*, *Classical Philology*, xxiii, 1928, pp. 239.

G. Dyson, *Orphism and the Platonic Philosophy in Speculum Religionis*, Essays, etc. presented to C. G. Montefiore, Oxford, 1929, pp. 19.

The endeavor to elaborate the system of Orphic doctrines is indeed the reason underlying research concerning the Rhapsodic Theogony, one of the chief Orphic works. It was hoped that through a literary analysis it would be possible to determine the age to which this poem belongs and to distinguish the fragments preserved in late authors which are derived from the old poem. The endeavor failed. The conclusions reached by different scholars were extremely different. In his first work Kern tried to vindicate a very early age for it,² Gruppe opposed him and advocated a much later time,³ and Kern, who since then has devoted his life to the study of Orphism and has published the very meritorious collection of the Orphic fragments, a reliable basis for further research, expresses in this work, page 141, as his present opinion the view that this vast poem, which includes various smaller poems, was composed not very long before the age of the neoplatonic philosophers who quote it, but that it preserves traces of early poems. I think this gives cor-

V. D. Macchiore, *From Orpheus to Paul, a History of Orphism*, New York, 1930.

U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Der Glaube der Hellenen*, ii, Berlin, 1932.

L. Weber, *Orpheus*, *Rheinisches Museum*, lxxxi, 1932, pp. 1.

G. Méautis, *L'âme hellénique d'après les vases grecs*, Paris, 1932, ch. iii, *L'Orphisme dans les mystères d'Eleusis*.

Gu. Rathmann, *Quaestiones Pythagoreae, Orphicae, Empedocleae*, Dissertation, Halle, 1933.

R. S. Conway, *Ancient Italy and Modern Religion*, Cambridge, 1933, ch. ii, *Orphism in Italy*.

A. Krüger, *Quaestiones Orphicae*, Dissertation, Halle, 1934.

P.-M. Schuhl, *Essai sur la formation de la pensée grecque*, Paris, 1934, pp. 228.

O. Kern, article "Mysterien" in Pauly-Wissowa's *Realenc. der class. Altertums-wissenschaft*, xvi, pp. 1279.

J. Watmough, *Orphism*, Cambridge, 1934.

W. K. C. Guthrie, *Orpheus and Greek Religion* (Methuen's Handbooks of Archaeology), London, 1935. This book appeared after my manuscript had been sent to the editor. I have only been able to insert references to it in the footnotes.

In order to lighten the burden of quotations I refer to these books only with the names of the authors and, if needed, an abbreviation of the title. Kern, without a title added, means Kern, *Orphicorum Fragmenta*, and Test. refers to the series of testimonia, Fr. to the series of Fragmenta which are numbered separately.

² O. Kern, *De Orphei, Epimenidis, Pherecydis theogoniis quaestiones criticae*, Dissertation, Berlin, 1888.

³ O. Gruppe, *Die rhapsodische Theogonie*, *Jahrbücher f. class. Philologie*, Supplementband xvii, 1890, pp. 689.

rectly the general idea which is all we can attain of the development and tradition of Orphic poetry.

Plato is the first to quote Orphic verses but there is no doubt that a mass of Orphic poetry existed long before him; we revert to it later. None of these epics was canonical as was Homer in heroic epic. Probably everybody who composed such a poem adapted earlier poems to his purpose, just as the Orphic poems adapted heroic epics and Hesiod, or borrowed freely from them as epic poets were wont to do. If such a poem circulated among the public it certainly underwent serious changes. We know the "wild" Homer texts. The text of the Orphic poems was still wilder, and there was nobody to expurgate it as the Alexandrian philologists did with the text of Homer. We have an instance of this process in a text which has been claimed as Orphic and which at least belongs to a kindred circle, the texts written on gold leaves found in tombs in Southern Italy and Crete. For my purpose it is unnecessary to enter into an analysis of them; the variations are shown adequately in the conspectus in Olivieri's edition.⁴ There is a common stock of verses but they differ very greatly in different examples; verses are added, left out, or altered. I think that the Orphic poems in passing through the hands of the public were changed in a similar manner; they were no more sacred than the formulas of the gold leaves which served the purpose of securing a happy life in the other world. Diels called them significantly "*orphische Totenpässe*." Hence it is somewhat misleading to speak of these Orphic poems as sacred books, for the sacredness of a book conveys the notion that its text is unalterable. This is decidedly not the case with regard to the Orphic poems.

If this be so, doubt is cast on the uniformity of the Orphic doctrines too in the early age. Many people seem to imagine unreflectingly that Orpheus was a religious teacher who passed on his doctrines to his followers — in spite of the fact that he is a mythical figure and may never have existed. In an important pamphlet Kern expressed the opinion that Orpheus is a projection of his community,⁵ and this is a possibility which

⁴ A. Olivieri, *Lamellae aureae orphicae* (Lietzmann's *Kleine Texte*, No. 133), Bonn, 1915, pp. 20.

⁵ O. Kern, *Orpheus*, Berlin, 1920.

ought not to be dismissed lightly. To the Greeks Orpheus was the author of the Orphic poems, not the founder of a certain religion or the inventor of certain doctrines, although certain leading ideas were peculiar to Orphism.⁶ It may be that the Orphic doctrines varied from the beginning; certainly they emerged from among a multitude of kindred conceptions of various kinds.

Against the view generally held of Orphism and its place in the evolution of Greek religion Wilamowitz raised a vigorous protest in his latest book.⁷ Orphism and Orphic poems existed in an early age, he says, but nothing is known of their doctrines, and we do not hear anything of Orphic mysteries or Orphic communities in that age. Plato rejects and despises the Orphics as cheap charlatans. It cannot be denied that Wilamowitz somewhat oversimplified the problem of criticism by not admitting testimonies other than such as expressly mention the name of Orpheus. The problem is thus reduced almost to a question of nomenclature. I find it impossible to adopt this seemingly simple standpoint. There is plenty of evidence for the fact that mystic, ascetic, and cathartic religious ideas were wide-spread in the archaic age and appealed strongly to the people. Wilamowitz passes lightly over even the lustral priests, medicine men, magicians, sooth-sayers, and miracle-workers who were famous in this age,⁸ such as Aristeeas, Hermotimos, and Epimenides, whom Rohde estimated more justly. Intent on the clarity and the higher spiritual and literary forms of Greek religion Wilamowitz has little esteem for these nebulous and superstitious movements which appealed more to unlettered people than to higher minds. But even the latter were not immune, as we know from Pythagorean doctrines which

⁶ Thus I disagree with Macchiore, l.c., pp. 122. It cannot be proved either that Orpheus lived or that he did not. The multiplicity of books ascribed to Orpheus and other Orphic authors prove that they were not sacred books in the sense attributed to such by revealed religions.

⁷ Wilamowitz, *Glaube d. Hell.*, ii, pp. 192.

⁸ According to Boulanger, *Orphée*, pp. 30, with whom Guthrie, *Orpheus and Greek Religion*, p. 47, agrees, Orpheus existed before Orphism, which was attached to him secondarily. That is of course uncertain, but if it be so, Orpheus was originally one of those medicine men who were usually connected with Apollo (cp. p. 187), and Orphism

embodied much of popular superstitions. Orphism is but one of the many currents of mystic and cathartic ideas emerging in the archaic age. It had its peculiar character but it shared other characteristics with the common stock of these movements. It is hard to believe that Orphism was sharply distinguished from other kindred movements; it is much more probable that it was influenced by them and influenced them. Orphism can only be rightly understood if taken in connection with the whole of the stream of religious ideas in the archaic age. That is why my title includes the words "and kindred movements."

Orphism had of course a peculiar character of its own and its peculiarity should as far as possible be estimated. If for this purpose we have recourse to testimonies of later sources, especially those found in the neoplatonists, there is a great risk of bringing in very late things belonging to an age in which Orphism was in vogue and had been made into an elaborate system of doctrines. Literary analysis cannot distinguish with absolute certainty which of these late testimonies are to be traced back to early Orphic writings. If we want to know what Orphism was like in the early age there is no other way than that which I adumbrated long ago:⁹ that is to take as a basis those testimonies which undoubtedly belong to the early age, and these may be supplemented by such later testimonies as show a necessary connection with the early ones; but in applying this method a great amount of caution is needed, or one will yield to the common temptation of elaborating a system of doctrines. Accordingly, I shall as far as possible abstain from using later testimonies.¹⁰ The result will probably seem meagre and it will certainly leave gaps, for early testimonies are scarce and not always explicit; but it will be worth while to make the attempt, for we shall at least try to find out what is testified as Orphic in the early age and this will be a valuable basis for any judgment.

by some chance took him for its prophet. But the attempts to clear up the origin of Orpheus are bound to fail, nor is the question of great importance for the Orphic doctrines.

⁹ In my *History of Greek Religion*, pp. 213.

¹⁰ This principle may explain and at the same time excuse why the vast modern literature on Orphism is quoted only sparingly; it has different aims and methods.

The sources derived from the archaic age, in which Orphism gained its strength and wide extension, being extremely scarce, Aristotle may be taken as a reasonable upper limit. The Persian wars mark an epoch even in religion. The mystic and popular religious movements were repressed; the state religion and the Olympic deities carried the day. Orphism was degraded and to a great extent lost its hold on men's minds. The important consequence was that its evolution must have been checked. What Aristophanes, Plato, and others say of Orphism was probably not invented in their times, but derived from an earlier age in which Orphism was creative.

Orpheus appears very early in Greek art and in a manner from which the full inferences have not yet been drawn. In the foundations of the treasury of the Sicyonians at Delphi several mutilated fragments of metopes were found. They cannot belong to that Sicyonian treasury the ruins of which are extant, for it was built in the end of the fifth century B.C. It has been suggested that the metopes were taken from the treasury of the Syracusans which was pulled down and rebuilt at the same time as the treasury of the Sicyonians.¹¹ This question is irrelevant to our purpose; the important fact is that the very archaic style of the sculpture indicates a date earlier than the middle of the sixth century B.C. Of the metope in question four fragments are left which can be put together two and two but leave a gap between them. The figures are mutilated but unmistakable. At either side is a horseman, the Dioscuri. Between them two men are standing on board a ship, each with a lyre in his arms. They are clad in long garments and wear long hair; one is beardless, the other has a beard on his chin. At the side of the man to the right is written ΟΡΦΑΣ. Of the name of the other man only a few uncertain traces are left. He was perhaps Philammon, who also is said to have taken part in the voyage of the Argonauts; for the sculptures obviously refer to this famous voyage. The presence of Philammon depends probably on local tradition.¹² More significant is the presence of Orpheus who

¹¹ Dinsmoor in *Bull. corr. hell.*, xxxvi, 1912, pp. 444; a comprehensive treatment in F. Poulsen, *Delphi*, pp. 73.

¹² Pherecydes from Athens who lived in the middle of the fifth century B.C. is the

never had intimate connections with Delphi in myth. Orpheus was thus already associated with the Argonauts before the middle of the sixth century B.C. One may perhaps venture to ask whether Orphic Argonautica did not already exist at that time and were not the real reason why Orpheus was added to the heroes of Argo.

The first mention of Orpheus in literature occurs in a fragment of Ibycus who lived just before the Persian wars. We have left only the two detached words, *ὀνομάκλυτον Ὀρφήν*;¹³ they prove only that Orpheus was at that time famous and his fame is extolled by Pindar in his fourth Pythian ode written for a victory of king Arcesilaus in 466 B.C. Pindar calls him much praised and the father of songs and connects him with Apollo.¹⁴ In Simonides, a contemporary of Pindar, we find for the first time the familiar picture of the wild beasts attracted by the song of Orpheus; birds flutter above his head and fishes leap up from the sea.¹⁵ This is almost a commonplace in tragedy. Aeschylus says that Orpheus drew all things to him for

only one to mention this; he said that Philammon and not Orpheus sailed with the Argonauts (Fragm. d. griech. Hist. Jacoby, fr. 26). Orpheus is reckoned among the Argonauts very often; the earliest literary testimony is Pindar, *Pyth.*, iv, 176. Jacoby in his commentary, i, p. 400, thinks that Pherecydes substituted Philammon for Orpheus because he attributed a much earlier date to Orpheus. This may be the reason why he polemized against the view that Orpheus took part in the expedition, but it is improbable that he invented the name of Philammon by himself. It seems that Robert, *Griech. Heldensage*, i, p. 416, n. 6, was right in restoring the vanished letters at the side of the other man as ΦΙΛΑΜΜΟΝ (they are depicted in *Bull. corr. hell.*, xx, 1896, p. 663 and pl. xi, 1), for no other name of a famous singer will agree better with the extant traces. If this be so, Philammon was before 550 B.C. said to have taken part in the voyage of Argo and it is probable that Pherecydes got this form of the myth from Delphi. That Philammon was inserted among the Argonauts at Delphi is explained by the fact that he alone of the mythical singers was closely connected with Delphi. He is not, as the others, concerned with epics but with choral lyrics. He is of course said to be a son of Apollo. He was the first to institute maiden choruses (Fragm. d. griech. Hist. 120, Jacoby). He is called a Delphian who sang at the birth of Leto, Artemis, and Apollo (Heracleides, *Συναγωγὴ τῶν ἐν μουσικῇ* in Plutarch, *De mus.*, 3, p. 1132 B); he gained the prize in the Pythian games (Paus. x, 7, 2). His connexions with Argos are less significant and are blended with those which bind him to Delphi (Paus. ii, 37, 3; ix, 36, 2). This seems to corroborate Robert's reading.

¹³ Bergk, *P. L. G.*, 4th ed., fr. 10 A; Kern Test. 2.

¹⁴ Pindar, *Pyth.*, iv, v. 176; Kern Test 58: *ἐξ Ἀπόλλωνος δὲ φορμικτὰς αἰοῖδ' ἀν πατήρ, ἔμολεν εὐαίνητος Ὀρφεύς*, viz. among the Argonauts.

¹⁵ Bergk, *P. L. G.*, 4th ed., fr. 40; Kern Test. 47.

joy,¹⁶ and Euripides, that playing on the lyre he attracted trees and wild beasts, and even stones, and was able to charm whom he wished.¹⁷

The popularity of the singer and musician Orpheus at Athens in the end of the sixth and in the fifth century B.C. is attested by a series of vase pictures beginning with a black-figured picture which represents Orpheus alone, with his lyre in his arms, ascending a platform.¹⁸ The red-figured vases, of which the most beautiful is a krater from Gela belonging to the age of Pericles,¹⁹ show Orpheus singing seated on a rock surrounded by Thracians in their characteristic costume who listen with enchanted mien. It is superfluous to review these vases in detail,²⁰ but it is to be noted that, except on the black-figured vase where he is alone, Orpheus always appears among men of Thrace and that the wild beasts, by which he is usually surrounded in later pictures, are absent, although they are mentioned in literature as early as Simonides and Aeschylus. The earliest instance of this very popular scene is found on a bronze mirror from the thirties of the fourth century B.C.²¹ The common supposition that the vase pictures derive from some famous painting is probably right.²²

As the crowning triumph of Heracles is the conquest of

¹⁶ Aeschylus, *Agam.*, v. 1629; Kern Test. 48.

¹⁷ Euripides, *Bacch.*, v. 560, *Iphig. Aul.*, v. 1211, cp. *Alc.*, v. 357; Kern Test. 49, 50, and 59 resp.

¹⁸ *Archäolog. Zeitung*, xlvi, 1884, p. 272. Miss Harrison's statement, *Proleg.*, p. 458, that Orpheus does not appear on black-figured vases is an error. The vase is inscribed, χαῖρε 'Ορφέϊ.

¹⁹ E.g. Harrison, *Proleg.*, p. 459, fig. 142; Roscher's *Lex. d. Mythol.*, iii, p. 1179.

²⁰ List in Roscher's *Lex. d. Mythol.*, iii, pp. 1178. See also Watzinger in *Furtwängler-Reichhold, Griech. Vasenmalerei*, Text, iii, pp. 356. Most of the vases in question are not well published.

²¹ The motif is also applied to Apollo, Euripides, *Alc.*, vv. 579; cp. Weber, l.c. Cp. also the way in which Amphion with his music erected the walls of Thebes. The statement in text is to be corrected in the light of the reference in Kern, *Rel. d. Griechen*, ii, p. 188, n. 2, to a Boeotian kylix of the VIIth century B.C. on which Orpheus is depicted playing the lyre and surrounded by seven birds and a deer. If this is so, the vase is extremely important, as being the earliest testimony referring to Orpheus.

²² The vase, *Annali dell' Istituto*, xvii, 1845, tav. M. is Italian (see Furtwängler in the 50th *Berliner Winckelmannsprogramm*, p. 158, n. 10), or it would be impossible to guess why Orpheus appears in this unseemly company.

death and the bringing back of Alcestis and that of the healing power of Asclepius the revival of the dead, so the crowning triumph of the power of Orpheus' song and music is his bringing back of his wife from the underworld. Thus the earlier authors,²³ if rightly understood, say. Plato is the first to give another version,²⁴ saying that the gods gave a phantom to Orpheus instead of his wife because he was a weakling. Kern thinks that the current version was created in the Hellenistic age.²⁵ Consequently he rejects the current interpretation of the famous relief from the Periclean age, the best copy of which is in the Museum of Naples. If we accept it with Heurgon who has subjected the double tradition to a searching analysis,²⁶ we have to admit that the myth of the unhappy ending existed in the fifth century B.C., but it is later than the tradition of the happy ending. This change of the myth is an outcome of the general Greek idea of the irresistible power of death and has a parallel in the Theseus myth²⁷ and comes from the addition of the very wide-spread motif of the punishment of curiosity.

The second scene of the Orpheus myth represented in vase paintings is his death at the hands of Thracian women. These vase pictures are all red-figured but begin early in the decade 490-480 B.C. There are two types: the one, Orpheus fleeing from the women stretching out his lyre in despair, and the other, which is still more popular, Orpheus sinking down pierced by a spit and raising his lyre in his right hand as if to protect himself from the attacks of the women.²⁸ The women assault Orpheus with improvised weapons, stones, spits, mallets, pestles, and sometimes a crooked knife characteristic of the Thracians. Loeschke thought that these were sacrificial implements and invented an otherwise unknown myth akin to that of Pentheus, that is that Orpheus had spied on the women at a secret sacri-

²³ Euripides, *Alc.*, v. 357; Isocr., xi, 8; Kern Test. 59 and 60.

²⁴ Plato, *Symp.*, p. 179 D; Kern Test. 60.

²⁵ Kern, *Orpheus*, pp. 24.

²⁶ J. Heurgon, *Orphée et Eurydice avant Vergile*, *Mélanges d'arch. et d'histoire de l'école française à Rome*, xlix, 1932, pp. 6.

²⁷ Cp. my *Mycenaean Origin of Greek Mythology*, p. 174.

²⁸ List in Roscher's *Lex. d. Mythol.*, iii, p. 1183. A recent and excellent treatment by Watzinger in *Furtwängler-Reichhold, Griech. Vasenmalerei*, Text, iii, pp. 355.

fice and was killed for this reason,²⁹ but Hauser proved conclusively that this interpretation is unfounded.³⁰ There are two vases which put together the two scenes showing both Orpheus singing among the Thracian men and the Thracian women hurrying to attack him, a krater at Naples with many figures in two zones³¹ and a hydria at Rouen³² with a man and two women, accompanied by a satyr.

The women never carry thyrsi as did the Maenads who killed Pentheus. Consequently Hauser and Watzinger (ll. cc.) reject the opinion that they are Bacchantes. Putting the two series of vase paintings together, they select among the various myths of the death of Orpheus that which says that the reason why the Thracian women killed him was that they became angry and jealous because he lured their men away from them by his music.³³ Hence Orpheus was later said to have praised pederasty.³⁴ But here some caution is needed. There is of course no question of a connexion between our vase paintings and the trilogy by Aeschylus, *Lycurgus*, for they are earlier than this drama which was probably written between 466 and 459 B.C. The second drama of this trilogy was called *Βασσάραι*, or *Βασσαρίδες*, a well-known Thracian name of the Bacchantes. Of its contents we do know that Dionysus, infuriated, sent the Bassarai who tore Orpheus asunder and scattered the pieces, which the Muses collected and buried at Leibethra.³⁵ Various opinions have been advanced concerning the plot of this tragedy: the question is whether the death of Orpheus was the chief subject or only an episode. To me the first alternative seems to be more

²⁹ Loeschcke in *Archäol. Anzeiger*, 1913, p. 70.

³⁰ Hauser in *Archäol. Jahrbuch*, xxix, 1914, pp. 26.

³¹ Hauser, l.c., p. 28, fig. 2.

³² Roscher's *Lex. d. Mythol.*, iii, p. 1181, fig. 5.

³³ Related by Pausanias, ix, 30, 5; Kern Test. 116.

³⁴ See Kern Test. 77. There is a strain of misogyny in the myths of Orpheus, apparent e.g. in the fact that his audience in the vase pictures is composed of men only, cp. Guthrie, *Orpheus and Greek Religion*, pp. 49. This seems easy to understand in accordance with the views advanced in this paper. The women clung to the old, more emotional Bacchic orgia, whilst the men were more accessible to the cosmogonic and anthropogonic speculations of Orphic preaching which did not appeal to the female sex. Thus the cleavage of the Dionysiac cult involved cleavage according to sex.

³⁵ Ps.-Eratosthenes, *Cataster*. 24; Kern Test. 113. Cp. below p. 225.

probable, but too little is preserved to admit of a sure judgment. The important point is that the women who killed Orpheus are called Bassarai and that they are sent by the wrath of Dionysus; precisely at this point of the hypothesis Aeschylus is quoted. The play is some thirty years later than the earliest extant vase paintings. If this form of the myth was an innovation of Aeschylus, it was a very thorough remodelling. It may have existed before Aeschylus. It is possible that the vase painter, though knowing that the women were Bacchantes, supplied them with such weapons as became women and left out the thyrsi. In fact, we are unable to make a decision.

I am afraid that a warning is needed against the common misconception that Orpheus was primarily a musician and that the tunes of his lyre had the power of enchantment. It was his song.³⁶ Simonides speaks of his beautiful song, Aeschylus of his persuasive tongue, Euripides of his persuasive and charming speech and of his beautiful song, and when Euripides mentions his music with the cithara, the instrument is simply mentioned because it served for the accompaniment of his song. The warning may be superfluous but the fact takes us to the further question of the difference between Orpheus and other singers and musicians famous in myth.

We saw above that Philammon is especially connected with choral lyrics and with Delphi. Linus is but a personification of the Linus song. Thamyras, whose fate was treated by Sophocles and who is represented in a series of vase paintings from about 450 B.C.,³⁷ is mentioned earlier than any other of these men in the Catalogue of Ships in the Iliad, ii, 595. Here the well known myth is related that Thamyras entered into competition with the Muses and was blinded by them. He is rightly regarded as the representative of the professional pride of minstrels. He takes his name from the gathering of people at the festivals listening to the minstrel.³⁸ He is sometimes men-

³⁶ The passages are cited above pp. 187-8 except for Eur., *Medea*, v. 543.

³⁷ See Pfuhl, *Malerei und Zeichnung der Griechen*, ii, p. 538.

³⁸ The often quoted gloss in Hesych.: Θάμυρις· πανήγυρις, σύνοδος. In an inscription from Thespieae, *Bull. corr. hell.*, i, 1926, p. 401 we find θαμυριδδόντες, evidently some sacral officials.

tioned together with Orpheus as a famous singer.³⁹ The common idea of the minstrel's blindness is in this story inverted and transformed into a punishment of Thamyras' wantonness. He is the piteous type of the aged minstrel who has lost his art.

Musaeus⁴⁰ is closely related to Orpheus. Plato calls both descendants of Selene and the Muses and says that some poets have their inspiration from Orpheus, others from Musaeus, but most of them from Homer.⁴¹ Hippias of Elis mentions both together with Homer and Hesiod.⁴² Aristophanes makes a neat distinction between them, saying that Orpheus taught mysteries and abstinence from killing, Musaeus cures of diseases and oracles.⁴³ The anonymous author of the tragedy *Rhesus* says that Orpheus raised aloft the torches of the mysteries and proceeds to mention Musaeus without any special characterization.⁴⁴ When Plato speaks of mysteries and oracles attributed to Orpheus and Musaeus,⁴⁵ we are entitled to make the same distinction as in Aristophanes. The oracles of Musaeus were very famous and numerous. Herodotus (vii, 6) relates that Onomacritus was driven out by Hipparchus, the son of Pisistratus, because he was convicted of having added a forged oracle to the collection of the oracles of Musaeus, and mentions (viii, 96) an oracle of Musaeus concerning the battle of Salamis.⁴⁶ Musaeus is a "descriptive" name; his personality is pale and shadowy. So men were likely to attach to him a part of the many poems floating about in this age, especially oracles, but also, at least in a later age, a theogony, the fragments of which show borrowing from Homer and Hesiod; and Plato attributes to him and his son a description of the happy life in the Other World as a perpetual drunkenness (below p. 208).

³⁹ Plato, *Ion*, p. 533 B with *Phemios*, *Leg.*, viii, p. 829 D, and *Resp.*, p. 620 A; Kern *Fr.* 12 and *Test.* 139.

⁴⁰ Testimonies and fragments in Diels, *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*. Cp. O. Kern, *De Musaei Atheniensis fragmentis*, Programm, Rostock, 1898.

⁴¹ Plato, *Resp.*, ii, p. 364 E; *Ion*, p. 536 B; Kern *Fr.* 3, *Test.* 244.

⁴² See below p. 195.

⁴³ Aristophanes, *Ranae*, v. 1032; Kern *Test.* 90.

⁴⁴ *Ps.-Euripides*, *Rhesos*, vv. 943.

⁴⁵ Plato, *Protag.*, p. 316 D; Kern *Test.* 92; cp. Rathmann, l.c., pp. 60.

⁴⁶ Cp. Nock in *Studies presented to F. Ll. Griffith*, Oxford, 1932, p. 248.

It is not surprising that the distinction between these two mythical persons was not sharply maintained. Sophocles is said to have called Orpheus a collector of oracles⁴⁷ and to Euripides Orpheus is sometimes a medicine man; he speaks of some drug prescribed in the Orphic writings and of a spell of Orpheus which will cause the stake to run of itself into the eye of the Cyclops.⁴⁸ But on the whole there is a characteristic distinction between Orpheus, the founder of mysteries, and Musaeus, the author of oracles.

A great many Orphic poems were in circulation; they are mentioned by Euripides, Hippias, Plato, and others. It was certainly these to which Orpheus owed his fame as a singer. I shall have to revert to these writings later on. Here I will mention only that a passage in Euripides speaking of tablets which the voice of Orpheus filled with writings⁴⁹ seems to offer the best explanation of a much discussed vase painting.⁵⁰ In the middle is a severed head, the singing head of Orpheus, which after his death and dismemberment by the Thracian women swam to Lesbos with his lyre. To the left is a seated youth writing on a tablet, to the right Apollo holding a laurel with his left hand and stretching out his right arm over the head. This picture is generally referred to an oracle of Orpheus on the island of Lesbos which is mentioned by so late an author as Philostratus.⁵¹ Robert quotes in this connection a story also told by this same Philostratus that Apollo made this oracle cease and interprets the gesture of the god to mean that with outstretched hand he commands the head to be silent.⁵² It is hazardous to interpret a vase picture of the fifth century B.C. from an isolated statement in the third century A.D. and it should not be admitted if another interpretation from an earlier source is at hand. I think that the gesture of Apollo is to be interpreted otherwise: he commands the youth to write down

⁴⁷ Sophocles, fr. 1012 Nauck, 2nd ed., *χρησμολόγος*.

⁴⁸ Euripides, *Alc.*, v. 962, *Cycl.*, v. 646; Kern Test. 82 and 83.

⁴⁹ Euripides, *Alc.*, v. 965; Kern Test. 82, *σανίσι τὰς Ὀρφέα κατέγραψε γῆρυς*.

⁵⁰ Harrison, *Proleg.*, p. 467, fig. 145; Roscher's *Lex. d. Mythol.*, iii, p. 1178, fig. 3.

⁵¹ Philostratus, *Heroic.*, v, 3; Kern Test. 134.

⁵² Philostratus, *Vit. Apollonii*, iv, 14; Kern Test. 134. Robert, *Das orakelnde Haupt des Orpheus*, *Archäol. Jahrbuch*, xxxii, 1917, pp. 146.

the words uttered by the head which according to the myth continued to sing after having been severed and while floating on the sea to Lesbos. He takes down from the voice of Orpheus (to use the words of Euripides), not oracles but poems.⁵³ This rôle of Apollo is easily understood in view of the fact that Pindar represented Orpheus as having been sent by Apollo; there is a connexion between Orpheus and Apollo which is not to be overlooked. Later Orpheus is said to be the son of Apollo.⁵⁴

The existence of Orphic poems in a very early age is thus warranted by the mythical fame of Orpheus as a singer. A catalogue of Orphic authors is preserved by Clement of Alexandria⁵⁵ who has taken it from a philologist from Alexandria, Epigenes, who was earlier than Callimachus. His work is certainly the foundation of another similar catalogue in Suidas.⁵⁶ As it is impossible to control the reliability of Epigenes, there is no need to discuss the many names mentioned. Attention was long ago called to the fact that many of the authors mentioned are localized in Sicily and Magna Graecia. No fewer than five are called Orpheus, one from Camarina, another from Croton, a third is said to be an Arcadian, and two Thracians. The existence of the Thracians may justly be doubted and was doubted in antiquity. Of the Arcadian nothing can be said.

⁵³ Cp. Kern in *Göttingischer gelehrter Anzeiger*, 1934, pp. 339.

⁵⁴ See above p. 187, and Kern Test. 22. That a detached head continues speaking is a widespread motif in folklore and Christian legend. Instances are collected by W. Déonna, *Orphée et l'oracle de la tête coupée*, *Revue des études grecques*, xxxviii, 1925, pp. 44; cp. A. B. Cook, *Zeus*, ii, p. 290. This belief must have been current in Greece too, for Aristotle, *De part. anim.*, iii, 10, finds it worth while to polemize against it, saying that some people interpreted the Homeric verse *φθεγγομένη δ' ἄρα τῷ γε κάρη κονίησιν ἐμίχθη* (*Od.* xxii, v. 329) in this manner, and he tells a story of a severed head which prophesied. There are two very wondrous stories of detached heads uttering oracles in Phlegon, *De mirab.*, 2 and 3; cp. the story of the head of Archonides preserved in honey and consulted by the Spartan king Cleomenes in Aelianus, *Var. Hist.*, xii, 8. Phlegon, who was a freedman of the emperor Hadrian, took the stories from a certain Hieron from Alexandria or Ephesus and from a Peripatetic philosopher Antisthenes. They are consequently considerably earlier than Philostratus, and one may ask whether the current motif of the prophesying head was not transferred to Orpheus in a later age; for the earlier testimonies tell only that the head thrown into the water with the lyre drifted to Lesbos where it was buried. See Kern Test. 77, 118, 130, 131, 132.

⁵⁵ Clem. Alex., *Strom.*, i, 21; Kern Test. 222.

⁵⁶ Suidas, s.v. Orpheus; Kern Test. 223.

Concerning the two others it may be supposed that anonymous Orphic poems came from Camarina and Croton and were ascribed to Orpheus who was consequently said to be a citizen of Camarina and of Croton respectively.

I proceed now to our early evidence. Alexis, a well-known writer of the middle comedy, mentions a library containing Orpheus, Hesiod, the tragedians, Choirilos, Homer, and Epicharmos;⁵⁷ Aristotle and Plato know Orphic poems, and Plato quotes the first Orphic verses.⁵⁸ Hippias of Elis, who lived in the end of the fifth century B.C., mentions the poems of Orpheus with those of Musaeus, Homer, and other poets,⁵⁹ and the contemporary writer, Ion of Chios, said that Pythagoras attributed some of his writings to Orpheus.⁶⁰ Euripides, finally, speaks contemptuously of the numerous Orphic writings as nebulous;⁶¹ another passage was discussed above (p. 193). Evidently a mass of Orphic poems were circulating the latter part of the fifth and in the fourth century B.C. There is a statement in Suidas that they were collected by an Athenian logographer, Pherecydes,⁶² who lived in the age of Pericles.

It is important to discuss the rôle attributed to Onomacritus with regard to the Orphic poems, for it is the foundation of the generally accepted opinion that Orphism was favored by Pisis-tratus and his sons. His forging of the oracles of Musaeus was mentioned above (p. 192). It is related by as early an author as Herodotus. His oracles are mentioned by Suidas and by Plutarch.⁶³ There can be no doubt that he edited a collection of oracles under the name of Musaeus. We know how oracles of the Bacides and Sibyls circulated among the people in this age and we remember the story told by Herodotus v, 90, of Pisistratus' collection of oracles which king Cleomenes seized,

⁵⁷ Alexis, fr. 135 Kock; Kern Test. 220.

⁵⁸ Plato, *Philebus*, p. 66 C, *Cratylus*, p. 402 B; Kern Fr. 14 and 15. Resp. ii, p. 364 E; Kern Fr. 3: he speaks of Orphic books which seers and wizards had.

⁵⁹ Hippias in *Clem. Alex., Strom.*, vi, 2; Kern Test. 252.

⁶⁰ *L.c.*, i, 131; *Diog. La.*, viii, 8; Kern Test. 248.

⁶¹ Euripides, *Hippol.*, v. 964; Kern Test. 213.

⁶² Cp. above p. 186, n. 12. Kern Test. 228.

⁶³ Suidas, s.v. Orpheus; Kern Test. 223 d. Plutarch, *De Pyth. orac.*, p. 407 B; Kern Test. 185.

the numerous oracles quoted by the same author, the oracle monger in the *Birds* of Aristophanes and even the rôle of oracles in the beginning of the Peloponnesian war according to Thucydides.

Pausanias mentions the epics of Onomacritus several times so that we get some idea of their contents. They were a theogony, at least in certain points dependent on that of Hesiod. Just as Hesiod had done, Onomacritus made the Charites daughters of Zeus and Eurynome and gave them the same names as he.⁶⁴ But he made additions of a peculiar character. Speaking of a small statue of Heracles which he saw in a temple at Megalopolis Pausanias says that this dwarf Heracles according to Onomacritus is one of the Idaean Dactyls.⁶⁵ Referring to a picture of Musaeus in the pinacotheca at Athens, he says that he has read in some epics that Musaeus received from Boreas the ability to fly and expresses his belief that these epics were a work of Onomacritus.⁶⁶ This shows the character of the poetry attributed to Onomacritus. Pausanias imputed to it such wondrous stories as were in vogue in the fifth century B.C. The most important passage⁶⁷ mentions the cardinal point of the Orphic doctrine, the dismemberment of Dionysus by the Titans and says that Onomacritus instituted mysteries to Dionysus. We revert to it below.

Two titles of writings of Onomacritus are mentioned. One, *Τελεταί*, "Initiations," occurs only in the catalogue of Orphic poetry in Suidas, where it is said that this poem was attributed by some to Onomacritus.⁶⁸ As we do not know any more of this poem, it will be judicious to leave it out of the reckoning. More reliable is the information that Onomacritus wrote Orphic epics. The title "Orphica" is quoted twice by Sextus Empiricus⁶⁹ who says that according to this poem, fire, water, and earth were the beginnings of all. The theogony of Hesiod is in

⁶⁴ Paus. ix, 35, 5; Kern Test. 192.

⁶⁵ Paus. viii, 31, 3. Kern Test. 193.

⁶⁶ Paus. i, 22, 7. Cp. that Abaris also was able to fly. I am not certain that this story is later than Herodotus as Rohde believes, *Psyche*, ii, p. 91 n. 1.

⁶⁷ See pp. 202-205, 221. Paus. viii, 37, 5; Kern Test. 198.

⁶⁸ Suidas, s.v. Orpheus; Kern Test. 233 d.

⁶⁹ Sext. Emp., *Pyrrh. Hypot.*, iii, 30; *adv. Physic.* i, 361; Kern Test. 191.

fact a cosmogony which explains in mythical guise the origin of the world. This kind of speculation was further developed by Pherecydes of Syros and even by Empedocles who retained divine names for his elements. "Fire and water and earth" in Sextus are paraphrases of divine names in Onomacritus, just as he also transcribes the mythological names of the elements in Empedocles with the same words, adding "air."⁷⁰ A passage of this kind would find its natural place in the beginning of the theogony or cosmogony of which Pausanias has preserved other fragments.

That the epics of Onomacritus were Orphic appears from passages in ecclesiastical writers⁷¹ who say that the poems attributed to Orpheus were composed by Onomacritus, and this information is corroborated by reliable evidence. Aristotle speaks of the "so-called Orphic epics," because he, as his commentator Philoponus explains, was of the opinion that Orpheus was not their author.⁷² It is not clear whether the statement which follows — that only the doctrine derived from Orpheus but Onomacritus had put it into verse — is taken from Aristotle or whether Philoponus added it on his own account. But it is certain that Aristotle knew of the floating mass of Orphic poetry, and probable that he thought that Onomacritus arranged and edited it.

The two statements that Onomacritus edited the oracles of Musaeus and that he composed Orphic poems are not in conflict. Both were aspects of the vigorous religious movements of the age; they were closely connected. We have seen how often

⁷⁰ Water and Earth are found in all mythical cosmogonies. The word "fire" is taken from the Stoic terminology and it is impossible to say to what it corresponded in Onomacritus.

⁷¹ The earliest from which the others are derived is Tatian, *adv. Graecos*, 41; Kern Test. 183.

⁷² Aristotle, *De anima*, A 5, with the commentary of Philoponus; Kern Test. 188, λεγομένοις (viz. ἐν τοῖς Ὀρφικοῖς καλουμένοις ἔπεσι) εἶπεν, ἐπειδὴ μὴ δοκεῖ Ὀρφέως εἶναι, ὥς καὶ αὐτὸς ἐν τοῖς περὶ φιλοσοφίας λέγει· αὐτοῦ μὲν γὰρ εἰσι τὰ δόγματα, ταῦτα δὲ φασὶ (D. R., φησι Trincavelli; this is the crucial point) Ὀνομάκριτον ἐν ἔπεσι κατατείνειν.

Wilamowitz, *Glaube d. Hell.*, ii, p. 196, n. 3, is pure sophistry. From the non-existence of Orpheus he infers the non-existence of Orphic doctrines. Aristotle denied the existence of Orpheus according to Cicero, *De nat. deorum*, i, 107, but cannot have denied the existence of Orphic doctrines, which were well-known in his age.

Orpheus and Musaeus are mentioned in the same breath, how Musaeus had something to say of the life in the Other World, and how a theogony was ascribed to him. Mysticism and faith in oracles thrive excellently together. It is but natural that a man like Onomacritus took a strong interest in Orphic poetry as well as in oracles. He reworked the traditional floating mass of Orphic poems and of oracles with the freedom which was characteristic of early poets, but in the case of the oracles this was characterized as forgery.

The only fragment expressly attributed to the Orphica of Onomacritus belongs to the beginning of a cosmogony which in this age must have taken the form of a theogony, and the fragments attributed to him by Pausanias belong also to a theogony. Evidently they are taken from the same poem. It showed a similarity to the Theogony of Hesiod. This is worthy of notice, for it proves that the Orphic poems were dependent on earlier epic poetry. It may perhaps be said that they used and reworked it according to their purposes, as later Orphic poets are known to do. This is corroborated by the fact that no other poem is so frequently quoted in the Orphic fragments as precisely the Theogony of Hesiod.⁷³

Thus the general idea of the importance of Onomacritus for Orphism is justified. He composed an Orphic epic and this poem was a theogony which owed much to Hesiod, certainly, because earlier Orphic poems were dependent on Hesiod, but he added Orphic myths and ideas.

The Orphica of Onomacritus was only one among many Orphic poems. The numerous titles cited in the Catalogue prove at least that a number of Orphic epics was in circulation. We do not know from which poem in particular fragments quoted as Orphic are taken, but we must put them together and see how they agree. Two passages are expressly quoted by Plato as Orphic. Both belong to a theogony and are dependent on earlier poetry. The first says that the beautifully streaming Oceanus was the first to begin marriage and married his sister by the same mother, Tethys.⁷⁴ This is evidently de-

⁷³ I refer to the long enumeration by Kern, *Orph. Fragm.*, Index v, p. 398.

⁷⁴ Plato, *Cratylus*, p. 402 B; Kern Fr. 15.

pendent on a verse of Homer (Il. xiv, 201) quoted by Plato in the same passage, in which Oceanus is said to be the origin and Tethys the mother of the gods. Orphic poetry appropriated old cosmology in mythological form. Unhappily we do not know the connexion of the two verses. If the marriage of Oceanus and Tethys was the very first, the theogony had a form and beginning other than that found in later Orphism.

The famous cosmogony in the *Birds* of Aristophanes⁷⁵ is generally believed to be Orphic. This is substantially right. We ought to remember that it is a parody and must have had a well-known prototype. If it is not Orphic it is closely akin to Orphism and belongs to the very same current of ideas. The difference is irrelevant. It is dependent on the *Theogony* of Hesiod (vv. 116) but there are some characteristic changes: Hesiod begins with Chaos, Earth, and Tartarus. Then he introduces Eros and lets Chaos bear Darkness and Night and these two marry and bear Ether and Day. Aristophanes begins with Chaos, Night, Darkness, and Tartarus, and adds expressly that then neither earth, nor air, nor heaven existed. This is a far more logical expression of the underlying idea that the ordered world, the cosmos, emerged from the primeval chaos and darkness. Then, he says, the black-winged Night bore a wind-egg in the infinite bosom of Darkness and out of this emerged Eros glittering with golden wings on his back and similar to the swift wind-whirls. This last phrase may be a reminiscence of the King Whirl of the Clouds.⁷⁶ The rest belongs to the parody and is of less interest to us. The high-sounding epithets betray the imitation of hieratic poetry, but much more important is that an old cosmological idea appears which is familiar to Orphism later, the world-egg.⁷⁷ Eros has the place which Phanes takes in Orphic doctrines mentioned by later authors identifying him with Eros. There is no reason to discuss the differences,

⁷⁵ Aristophanes, *Aves*, vv. 690; Kern Fr. 1.

⁷⁶ This comparison with a notion of the contemporary philosophy seems to be evident. Krüger's attempt l.c., p. 30, to show that Eros here is a light-god is erroneous. The fundamental assumption that Eros in the age of Aristophanes was identified with Phanes is not demonstrable.

⁷⁷ A. Olivieri, *L'uovo cosmogonico degli Orfici*, *Atti della R. Acad. di archeol., lettere e belle arti di Napoli*, N. S., vii, 1919, A. B. Cook, l.c.

only to note the fundamental similarity. There were probably differences between various Orphic cosmogonies, especially the use of different ages. It does not really matter whether the source from which Aristophanes drew was expressly attributed to Orpheus or not. The ideas are the same as those of Orphism.

The second fragment quoted by Plato says: "let the kosmos of the song cease in the sixth generation."⁷⁸ The question of the Orphic ages of the world in later authors and the problem how they are to be correlated with this passage is difficult.⁷⁹ The important point is that six ages were mentioned in the Orphic poetry existing at the time of Plato. One is instantly reminded of the five ages in Hesiod, which, however, occur in his *Works and Days*, not in his *Theogony*. Only one of these, the Golden Age, is associated with a god, Cronos. It is natural to suppose that the Orphics added a sixth age to the five of Hesiod, but closer consideration shows this to be improbable. The Orphics cannot have simply taken over these five ages of which four are named from metals, for they are essentially not mythological. But the Orphics can have derived the idea of the ages of the world from this famous passage and given it another direction.

Homer relates that Cronos was dethroned by his son Zeus and Hesiod relates the myth of Cronos, how he dethroned and mutilated his father Uranos. It happens that there are three generations of gods. It is tempting to assume that the age of Chaos and that of Eros, that is to say, the creation of the world, preceded the three well-known generations of the gods and that to these five the age of Dionysus was added. Thus the six generations will be complete.⁸⁰ That the Orphics had appropriated

⁷⁸ Plato, *Philebus*, p. 66 C; Kern Fr. 14. Instead of *κόσμον* Plutarch, *de E*, p. 391 D has *θυμόν*. *κόσμον* has been emended variously (*θεσμόν* or *οἶμον*). *θυμόν* is hardly better. Taken in the usual sense of "good order," *κόσμον* refers to the order of the creation of the world which Orphic poetry tried to establish in a more deliberate manner than earlier cosmogonies.

⁷⁹ Cp. Kern, *Orpheus*, p. 48.

⁸⁰ Guthrie, *Orpheus and Greek Religion*, p. 82, has a list compiled from the Orphic theogony which comprises seven names: Universe, Phanes, Night, Uranos, Cronos, Zeus, Dionysus. It does not agree with the cosmogony in Aristophanes, for there Night precedes Eros, who of course corresponds to Phanes, and Night belongs with Chaos etc. to the first generation. If Night is cancelled or taken together with Chaos in the first

the myths in question for their purposes appears from a passage in Isocrates to which too little attention is given.⁸¹ He says: "the poets have told such stories of the gods as no one would dare to tell of his enemies, they have reproached them not only for thefts and adultery and service with mortals but also for having devoured their children and castrated their fathers and fettered their mothers, and they invented many other crimes of theirs. They have not been punished for this in a becoming manner but have not escaped punishment altogether. Some became vagrants and were in need of their daily livelihood (Homer), some were blinded (Homer again and Thamyras), another was obliged to flee from his country and quarrelled continually with his next of kin (Hesiod), Orpheus who more than any other touched upon these stories ended his life by being dismembered." Of course the myths of Zeus and Cronos can be referred to Hesiod and the fettering of Hera was known in the sixth century B.C. according to the François vase, but the emphatic reference to Orpheus as the one who more than any other treated such stories makes it practically certain that they were found in Orphic poems. Orphism developed ever more the propensity for weird myths which appears in Hesiod; they suited the mystic tendency of this religious movement.

Of the Orphic poetry circulating in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. we recognize fragments of a theogony dependent on the theogony of Hesiod which it enlarged with weird myths, remodelled according to its mystic propensities, and systematized. This last point is apparent from its treatment of the first principles of the world and in its distinguishing six ages of generations of the world. As numerous Orphic poems existed, it is impossible to know if the scanty fragments preserved belonged to one or to different poems or were common to them

generation, the six generations come out. The lists quoted *op. cit.*, p. 103, from Alexander of Aphrodisias are incomplete, but prove the variety of Orphic cosmogony. In the first one Oceanus has got a place which agrees with the quotation from Plato, p. 198.

⁸¹ Isocrates, xi, 38; Kern Fr. 17. Lobeck appreciated it justly, *Aglaophamus*, i, p. 602.

all, but this is primarily a literary question. The important fact is the common tendency which gave a certain unity to the various Orphic poems.

Finally we come to the passage in Pausanias mentioned above. He says ⁸² that Onomacritus took over the name of the Titans from Homer and instituted orgia for Dionysus and invented the story that the Titans caused the sufferings of Dionysus. This passage is of the greatest importance, for it contains the cardinal myth of Orphism, the dismemberment of Dionysus-Zagreus, and raises the question of the relation of Orphism to the cult of Dionysus. That this is a problem, in spite of the general opinion that the essential myth of Orphism was Dionysiac, is proved by the categoric denial of Wilamowitz of any connexion whatsoever between Orphism and the Dionysiac mysteries.⁸³ If we endorse the evidence offered by Pausanias, the question is settled. But it is of so late a date that it is open to doubt. It may be said that the epics which circulated under the name of Onomacritus in the time of Pausanias were a late product falsely ascribed to Onomacritus.⁸⁴ This requires careful scrutiny.

We must again revert to Plato. He speaks once of the "Titanic nature" of man as a proverbial saying in the sense of an innate evil nature, referring to such as are not willing to obey authorities, parents, or laws, and finally do not care for oaths, trustworthiness, and gods.⁸⁵ The common myth of the battle of the Titans and the Olympian gods and their imprisonment in Tartarus is not sufficient to explain this proverbial use of the word. For in this myth the Titans are enemies of the Olympian gods, but they are not represented as the principle of evil. Aeschylus had quite another idea of the Titans in writing his *Prometheus* which would have been impossible if, in current myth, the Titans had represented the incarnation of evil as they

⁸² Paus. viii, 37, 5; Kern Test. 194.

⁸³ Wilamowitz, *Glaube d. Hell.*, ii, p. 193.

⁸⁴ Wilamowitz, *l.c.*, ii, p. 379, n. 1. Again I do not understand the reasoning of this great scholar. If a poem is ascribed to a mythical personage like Orpheus it is of course a pseudepigraphon. If it is ascribed to a historical personage like Onomacritus it may be spurious, but we are on firmer ground, being able to control the reliability of the evidence.

⁸⁵ Plato, *Leg.*, iii, p. 701 B; Kern Fr. 9.

do in the proverbial saying quoted. It is fully understandable only in the light of their rôle in Orphism, their dismembering of the Divine Child, and of the Orphic doctrine that human nature had incorporated a part of the Titans. Even if it is not mathematically demonstrable, it is practically certain that this expression is due to the Orphic myth referred to. Consequently it corroborates the information in Pausanias. The myth of the dismembering of Dionysus by the Titans was part of Orphism from early times.

According to Pausanias, Dionysus, whom later Orphic authors call Zagreus, was the god in whose honor Onomacritus instituted his Orphic mysteries. But the enmity between Dionysus and Orpheus is apparent. Aeschylus made Dionysus in wrath incite against Orpheus the Maenads, who tore him into pieces. Even if the vase painters do not give thyrsi to the Thracian women, it cannot be believed that the introduction of the Maenads is an innovation of Aeschylus. Again Plato comes to our aid, quoting the well-known verse: "Many are the thyrsus-bearers, few are the Bacchantes."⁸⁶ It is said to be Orphic by Olympiodorus but this late authority neither proves nor disproves its Orphic origin. Plato himself attributes it to those who instituted the initiations; the question is whether he has the Orphics specifically in mind, and this must be so. The sense of the verse is evidently to distinguish between those who only carried the outward signs of Dionysiac mysteries and those who were filled with true Bacchic inspiration. It testifies to a cleavage in the Dionysiac mysteries. The cult of Dionysus was by the agency of Delphi mitigated and incorporated into the state cult; it lost its old savagery but also its inspiring force. The verse shows that certain persons believed themselves to be true Bacchantes, in other words, to have attained to a higher form of Dionysiac worship.

The deep-lying reason for this hostility appears in its true light only when we consider the transformation of the Bacchic sacrament, the omophagia, in Orphic myth. The central rite of the Bacchic orgia, — the dismembering and eating of an animal,

⁸⁶ Plato, *Phaedo*, p. 69 C; Kern *Fr. 5*. Cp. Rathmann, *l.c.*, p. 61.

representing Dionysus himself, whose place, in myths, is often taken by a child, — was transmuted into a crime in the Orphic myth, the dismembering of the child-god Dionysus by the wicked Titans. The Bacchantes were thus put on a level with the Titans, the principle of evil. Thus, the bitter enmity between the adherents of Orpheus and those of Dionysus is fully understandable, and so the death of Orpheus at the hands of the Maenads is explained. I should not dare to say that Orpheus died a martyr to his religion,⁸⁷ but this manner of death is the mythical vengeance for his blasphemy according to the *jus talionis*. He had turned the Bacchic sacrament into a crime and was torn into pieces by the Maenads like another enemy of the orgia, Pentheus.

If Dionysus occupied the very centre of the specifically Orphic myth and this myth was derived from the Bacchic sacrament but transformed the sacred rite into the primeval crime, the deep reason for the contempt of the Orphics for the common Bacchantes — in their times the official Bacchantes of the state cult — and for the hostility of the Bacchantes against the Orphics emerges clearly, as does also their intimate connexion. Their relation is somewhat similar to that between the early Christians and the Jews. The Christians appropriated the holy writings of the Jews but infused a new meaning into them and accused the Jews of not having understood them; they despised the Jews and were hostile to them and the Jews who adhered to the old which they believed to be right returned the contempt and hostility. The hostility of the worshippers of Dionysus to this reformed cult of their god brings to mind the hostility which Dionysus himself encountered among the adherents of the old religion in the beginning of his career. For the Orphic religion also put Dionysus in the centre of its doctrine. This explains on the other hand why the Orphic mysteries could be called Dionysiac, why the Orphic and the Dionysiac mysteries were constantly confused, why e.g. Pausanias in the same sentence in which he relates the dismemberment of Dionysus is able to say that Onomacritus, the propagator of Orphism,

⁸⁷ Kern, *Orpheus*, p. 26.

instituted mysteries for Dionysus. There is no doubt that the verse which says that many are the thyrsus-bearers, few are the Bacchants, belongs to the Orphics, for it explains at once the close relation of Orphism to the mysteries of Dionysus and the hostility between the followers of Orpheus and the Bacchants.

The proverbial saying of the Titanic nature of man contains a piece of Orphic anthropology; another is found in a famous passage of Plato where the body ($\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$) is said to be the tomb ($\sigma\eta\mu\alpha$) of the soul.⁸⁸ I do not understand how Wilamowitz can so flatly deny that this is Orphic.⁸⁹ Plato begins by saying that some say that the body is the tomb of the soul, the soul being buried in it during this life. Then he proceeds with an etymological explanation of the word $\sigma\eta\mu\alpha$ (tomb): because the soul signifies ($\sigma\eta\mu\alpha\iota\nu\epsilon\iota$) what she signifies through it, viz. the body, it is justly called $\sigma\eta\mu\alpha$ (sign or tomb). He continues by saying that the followers of Orpheus especially give this name ($\sigma\eta\mu\alpha$) to the body, because the soul is punished for that for which it is punished, and it seems to have this covering — the likeness of a prison — in order that it may be kept in custody ($\sigma\omega\zeta\eta\tau\alpha\iota$). This is consequently, just as it is named, a prison ($\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$ derived from $\sigma\omega\zeta\epsilon\iota\nu$) of the soul until it has paid its due debt. Plato says explicitly that especially the followers of Orpheus gave the name of a tomb of the soul to the body. It may, however, seem doubtful whether the etymologies ($\sigma\eta\mu\alpha$ - $\sigma\eta\mu\alpha\iota\nu\epsilon\iota\nu$, $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$ - $\sigma\omega\zeta\epsilon\iota\nu$) are quoted from the Orphics or are Plato's own speculations. It may be doubted if such etymological speculations are appropriate for the Orphics, and it seems not unlikely that Plato added them as explanatory comments intended to illuminate the saying. We shall come back later to the concept which probably underlies the identification of the body with a tomb; it has a deep religious and ethical sense.

The important point is that the same ethical conception comes into play here as in the saying of the Titanic nature of man. This latter was the evil propensities of man. If the soul is, as it must be, the good, divine principle of man, the body,

⁸⁸ Plato, *Cratylus*, p. 400 C; Kern Fr. 8.

⁸⁹ Wilamowitz, *Glaube d. Hell.*, ii, p. 199.

being the tomb of the soul, must represent the evil part of man. This goes together with the asceticism which the Orphic practised and gives a deeper basis for it than the common cult.

Abstinence from killing animals and eating their flesh is the best known feature of Orphism. Refusing to eat the flesh of animals sacrificed was an outstanding characteristic which made an especially strong impression on people. It is mentioned contemptuously by Euripides together with the mass of nebulous Orphic writings⁹⁰ and to it refers the saying of Aristophanes that Orpheus taught men to abstain from killing.⁹¹ Plato uses the phrase "Orphic life" for abstinence from meat and eating only vegetables.⁹² Herodotus informs us that the Orphics knew the prohibition of woollen garments, no doubt because wool is taken from animals. The Pythagoreans knew the same prohibition; it was forbidden to those initiated into these mysteries to be buried in woollen garments.⁹³ The abstinence from meat was a peculiarity of the Pythagoreans also, but if one examines the testimonies⁹⁴ it appears that they are conflicting, some speaking of a general prohibition and others only of a prohibition of certain parts of the animal or certain animals, e.g. the matrix, the heart, the brain, the sea-urchin, especially of such animals as were not sacrificed. If the general prohibition against killing animals and eating their flesh existed originally among the Pythagoreans, these special prohibitions would be meaningless. Thus it seems certain that the Pythagoreans originally knew only the special prohibitions

⁹⁰ Euripides, *Hippol.*, v. 952; Kern Test. 213.

⁹¹ Aristophanes, *Ranae*, v. 1032; Kern Test. 90.

⁹² Plato, *Leg.*, vi, p. 782 C; Kern Test. 212. The words are *ἐμψυχα*, *ἄψυχα*.

⁹³ Herodot., ii, 81; Kern Test. 216. *ὁμολογέουσι δὲ τὰ ταῦτα τοῖσι Ὀρφικοῖσι καλεσμένοισι* [καὶ Βακχικοῖσι, ἔοδσι δὲ Αἰγυπτίοισι] καὶ Πυθαγορείοισι. This passage is always adduced as a chief testimony for the identity of the Orphic and the Dionysiac mysteries. Wilamowitz, *Glaube d. Hell.*, ii, p. 189, n. 1, called attention to the fact that the words here put between brackets are absent from one class of manuscripts. They were no doubt added later. Cp. Rathmann, l.c., pp. 52. Consequently Herodotus testifies only to the agreement of the Orphics with the Pythagoreans in this one detail. But see for the other opinion Nock, *Conversion*, p. 277 (note to p. 24 ff.)

⁹⁴ See Rathmann, l.c., pp. 14. Th. Wächter, *Reinheitsvorschriften im griech. Kult* (*Religionsgesch. Versuche u. Vorarbeiten*, ix, 1, 1910) pp. 78. F. Boehm, *De symbolis Pythagoreis*, Dissertation, Berlin, 1905, p. 23. Cp. A. Delatte, *Vie de Pythagore*, *Mémoires cour. par l'acad. belgique*, 1922.

which are connected with old popular superstitions, and that the general prohibition is later and probably due to Orphic influence; for in regard to Orphism it is attested for an early age.

This is illuminating. For in Orphism the prohibition of killing animals and eating their flesh has a deeper reason. If the body was the tomb of the soul the body was unclean and must be avoided. The prohibition may be referred to the uncleanness of the body, or to the crime of the Titans, but usually its reason is said to be the belief in metempsychosis, the transmigration of the soul into animals, a belief which is ascribed to the Pythagoreans as well as to the Orphics.

Before we enter upon this involved question we must inquire into the ideas of the Other Life current among the adherents of Orpheus and related movements in an early age. The evidence which claims the earliest date is an anecdote related of the Spartan king Leotychides who reigned 491-469 B.C. When the Orphic priest Philippus, who was exceedingly poor, claimed that those who had been initiated by him would live in happiness after death, the king asked him why he did not die instantly.⁹⁵ This is not, of course, good evidence, for such anecdotes are attributed freely to various persons. Precisely the same story is told of the philosopher Antisthenes,⁹⁶ but it is less credible that it belonged to him originally, because his quaint person and doctrines had taken hold of the fancy of the people and attracted various anecdotes to him.

In a well-known passage Plato speaks of begging priests and sooth-sayers who go to rich men's doors and persuade them that they have received a power from the gods through sacrifices and spells to make good with rejoicing and feasts what wrong they or their ancestors have committed.⁹⁷ These are base sorcerers, for they promised also at a small cost to compel the gods to help people to harm their enemies. They appealed to Homer and other poets and especially they produced a lot of books by Musaeus and Orpheus, according to which they

⁹⁵ Plutarch, *Apophthegm. Lac.*, p. 224 E; Kern Test. 203.

⁹⁶ *Diog. La.*, vi, 1, 4.

⁹⁷ Plato, *Resp.*, ii, p. 364 B; Kern Fr. 3. Cp. to this section Rathmann, pp. 59.

sacrificed, and they persuaded private persons as well as whole cities that there is a deliverance and purification from guilt, with sacrifices and pastimes, for the living as well as for the dead. They called these sacrifices and pastimes initiations which deliver us from pains in the after-life. Frightful things awaited the man who did not sacrifice.

This passage is the chief basis for the opinion that Plato despised the Orphics as jugglers and sorcerers, but elsewhere he often speaks of Orpheus with the highest esteem. He reckons Orpheus among the sweetest singers, he says that the poets drew their inspiration from Orpheus among others, and Socrates asks what one would give to encounter Orpheus, Musaeus, Hesiod, or Homer in the Other World.⁹⁸ We should here make a valid distinction. Plato does not despise Orphism as such but he despises the vile jugglers who, as often is the case, grew like parasites on the mystic movement and profited by the superstitions of people and their fear of Hell. These jugglers found a powerful instrument for their base ends in the Orphic doctrine of punishment in the Other World and the purifications by which they professed to avert it. People were at this time much more preoccupied with the fear of these punishments than is generally admitted. We may e.g. compare the description in the *Frogs* of Aristophanes and Democritus' words about the fear and distress of those who have committed wrong-doing and believe in lying myths concerning the life after death,⁹⁹ but these ideas were not specifically Orphic.¹⁰⁰ We ought not to judge the Orphics from these vile hangers-on; they were not content with purifications only. We shall see that they gave a prominent place to Dike, Justice.

A few lines above¹⁰¹ Plato describes the rewards which are given to the righteous ones by the gods in the Nether World, the symposium of the righteous ones; according to Musaeus and his son they spend their time crowned with wreaths in

⁹⁸ Plato, *Leg.*, viii, p. 829 D, *Ion*, p. 536 B, *Apol.*, p. 41 A; Kern Fr. 12, Test. 244, 138.

⁹⁹ Democrit. in Stobaeus, iv, 120; Fr. 297 Diels.

¹⁰⁰ Herein I agree with van Essen, l.c., p. 61.

¹⁰¹ Plato, *Resp.*, ii, p. 363 D, Kern Fr. 4.

eternal drunkenness. They promise, however, still larger rewards from the gods to them, saying that those who keep their oaths will leave grandsons and descendants. In these and other such ways they praise righteousness. Those who are not pious and righteous they cause to be buried in mud in the Underworld and to carry water in sieves, and such men are also punished in this life by evil report and otherwise.

These doctrines are ascribed to Musaeus and his son. Unhappily Plato does not mention the name of the son,¹⁰² but this does not matter. Musaeus and Orpheus are closely connected and not sharply distinguished. Musaeus is a representative of the same current of ideas as Orpheus. The two passages from Plato's *Republic* quoted here form one coherent section. What is said of Musaeus and his son in the beginning deals with the same topic as that which is said of Musaeus and Orpheus at the end. The horrors hinted at in the latter passage are specified in the first. They are further touched upon in a well-known passage in the *Phaedo*.¹⁰³ Here Plato says that those who instituted the initiations were no common-place men but, speaking in riddles, intimated long ago that those who come to Hades without having been initiated will lie there in the mire, but that those who come thither purified and initiated will dwell with the gods. Evidently Plato has the same doctrine in mind here.

The horrors awaiting people in the Underworld are punishments for wrong-doing in this world. The clew to this idea is the concept of justice, an old idea proclaimed by Hesiod. The old conception that righteousness will be rewarded and wrong-doing punished in this life, at least upon the descendants, is not abandoned, but a far-reaching new conception is added which was destined to be much more important: rewards and

¹⁰² Dieterich, *Nekyia*, p. 72, supposed that Orpheus was the son of Musaeus. There is no evidence for this. Eumolpus is sometimes said to be the son, sometimes the father of Musaeus. Musaeus was connected with the Eleusinian mysteries because they too gave the hope of a happy life in the Other World. But it is rash to conclude that Eleusinian doctrines are here related. The widespread fear of various punishments in Hades may have caused people to be initiated at Eleusis, but there is no evidence that these mysteries knew of punishments in the Other Life.

¹⁰³ Plato, *Phaedo*, p. 69 C; Kern Fr. 5.

punishments are transferred to the Underworld. The punishments in the Underworld are known from Pindar and from the great painting of Polygnotus at Delphi representing Hades. The rewards are pictured by Pindar, in passages to which we return below, in colors borrowed from the old myth of the Islands of the Blest (below p. 214). In Plato they are represented as a continual drunkenness. We should not be too contemptuous of this idea; it was not altogether foreign even to the early Christians. It is a crude attempt to express the exalted joy which awaits the righteous ones. Nor is it anything new that this happiness is reserved for those who have been initiated. This is proper to all mysteries, even the Eleusinian for which it is attested by the hymn to Demeter (v. 480). It is a matter of course, for as old belief made men continue their life of this world in the next,¹⁰⁴ so the initiated ones continued to celebrate the mystery feasts in the Other World. Thus Aristophanes describes it. When the pollution of guilt and the necessity for purification too were emphasized the importance of the mysteries was reinforced. But the influence of mythology was omnipresent. The picture of the happiness which awaited the initiated ones borrowed its colors from the Elysium whose gates were flung open not only to the heroes but also to the common people.

The new idea is the Underworld as a place of punishment for the sins of men. Its origin is revealed by the saying that whosoever comes to Hades without having been initiated shall lie in the mire. Just as in this life he has not been cleansed from mire, he will after death lie in his mire. This could be regarded as a punishment of his guilt, which was his contempt of the initiations. Or again he must constantly carry water for purification, but his labor is fruitless because he carries it in a sieve or pours it into a pierced vessel.¹⁰⁵ But there was guilt other than the contempt of the initiations, for the mystic movement

¹⁰⁴ Cp. my paper *Zeus mit der Schicksalswaage*, *Bull. de la Société royale des lettres de Lund*, 1932-33, pp. 3.

¹⁰⁵ This is the original meaning of the myth of the Danaides. The inscription at the side of the water-carrying women in the painting of Polygnotus at Delphi stated that they were non-initiated, *Paus.* x, 31, 9. Cp. a black-figured vase at Palermo with water-carriers, some of whom are men; best figured in Méautis, l.c., pl. xlv and xlv.

claimed justice and punishment of wrong-doing, if the guilty one had not been purified. Even in popular belief there is a kind of punishment after death dependent on the idea that the other life is a continuation and repetition of this life. The repetition of a criminal action serves as a punishment.¹⁰⁶ Here the old idea of retaliation found place. Polygnotus in his painting of the Underworld at Delphi represented a man who, having maltreated his father, was throttled by him. But there are other kinds of punishments to fit wrong-doers, and accordingly other conceptions were taken from mythology. The eleventh book of the *Odyssey* describes Odysseus' visit to the Underworld. Offenders against the gods, Tityus, Tantalus, Sisyphus, who once had been punished in the Upper World, are here transferred to the Nether World.

It seems to be somewhat irrelevant which of these things are ascribed to the Orphics. They belong to one and the same current of religious ideas. The belief in the punishments in Hades was wide-spread and not specifically Orphic, but it is evident from Plato that it played a great part in Orphic practice. Above all it was fear of these punishments which drove people into the arms of Orphism and they had a large place in the Orphic poems. There were one or more poems called "Descent into Hades," variously ascribed to Orpheus, or Orpheus from Camarina, or Prodicus from Samos, or Cercops the Pythagorean, or Herodicus from Perinthos.¹⁰⁷ The existence of such an Orphic poem in early times does not seem open to doubt.¹⁰⁸ It may be assumed that this, exactly like other Orphic poems, was dependent on earlier poems and the prototype was certainly the eleventh book of the *Odyssey*, the descent of Odysseus into Hades. Concerning the contents we are able only to hazard guesses. It must have described not only the punishment of wrong-doers but also the bliss of the initiated and the righteous ones. With this Descent the myth of Orpheus'

¹⁰⁶ See my above-cited paper.

¹⁰⁷ Kern, *Orph. Fragm.*, p. 304; *Test.* 176, 222, 223.

¹⁰⁸ Norden in his commentary on Vergil's *Aeneis*, book vi, pp. 156, 231, made a rather subtle attempt to prove that Vergil used an Orphic *Catabasis* which was probably composed before the Hellenistic age. Cp. his paper *Orpheus and Eurydice*, *Sitzungsber. der Akad. Berlin*, 1934, pp. 659.

journey to fetch his wife must be connected. It appears in the famous relief from the age of Phidias. Probably Orpheus himself was the hero of the Orphic poem on the Descent into Hades, but it is very difficult to find a connexion between the myth and Orphic belief. At all events it has been refashioned by exoterics and blended with common mythological motifs.¹⁰⁹

Thus the punishments in the Underworld were an important part of Orphic belief, though not peculiar to it. Furthermore the Orphics shared with other mysteries belief in the happiness of the initiated ones as well as of the heroes in the Other World, and they held the opinion shared by many that required not only punishment of wrong-doers but also rewards for the righteous in the Other Life. They emphasized the idea of rewards because they expected such themselves. And, as van Essen says (p. 61), they had their own doctrine of the manner in which this eternal happiness could be attained.

The problem of the transmigration of souls or metempsychosis is much more complicated and difficult. In a searching analysis Rathmann (l.c., n. 1) tried to prove that this doctrine is not ascribed to the Pythagoreans by any author earlier than the last century B.C. I am not certain that he is right, for it seems difficult not to believe that the doctrine of the transmigration of the souls is implied in a passage in Aristotle.¹¹⁰ However this may be, we cannot possibly accept the common and easy explanation that the doctrine of the transmigration of souls originated with the Pythagoreans and was taken over from them by the Orphics. If, in addition, we consider what was said above (p. 206) concerning abstinence from meat, we shall perhaps get the impression that the Pythagoreans were originally not so much concerned with religion as they were later. As time went on they were increasingly influenced by the mystic movement and systematized their religious ideas.

¹⁰⁹ See above, p. 189.

¹¹⁰ Aristotle, *De anima*, i, 3, 23, ὥσπερ ἐνδεχόμενον κατὰ τοὺς Πυθαγορικοὺς μύθους τὴν τυχοῦσαν ψυχὴν εἰς τὸ τυχόν ἐνδύεσθαι σῶμα. The objections of Krüger, l.c., p. 37, are less valid. Cp. Rathmann, l.c., p. 18. In the most recent treatment of metempsychosis, W. Stettner, *Die Seelenwanderung bei den Griechen und Römern* (Tübinger Beiträge zur Altertumswiss. H. 22, 1934), the assertion of the Pythagorean origin of the doctrine is repeated but without an attempt at a historical investigation.

There is no need for quotations from Plato. The doctrine that the soul which goes to the realm of the dead comes back and enters another living body is fundamental for his philosophical thinking. He says that this is an old saying and he refers to priests and priestesses who make it their business to give reason for that with which they are occupied, and to poets, especially Pindar, from whom he quotes a fragment to which we return below: but he never expressly refers the doctrine to the Orphics.¹¹¹ When in the vision of the Armenian Er he tells that Orpheus after death elected the life of a swan,¹¹² this is of course an invention of Plato's and not of the Orphics. Rathmann thinks that the passages in the *Cratylus*, in which the body is said to be the tomb of the soul, proves that the Orphics knew the doctrine of transmigration of souls.¹¹³ I cannot wholly agree with this assertion. The saying is Orphic, but taken *prima facie* it would also correspond to a conception similar to that of the Gnostics, that the soul sinks down from a higher spiritual world into the material and that her task is to free herself from the bonds of the body through right living and asceticism in order that she may return to her home.

There is a passage in Aristotle which is perhaps a little clearer, though not wholly clear.¹¹⁴ He says that the Orphic epics teach that the soul enters (the body) from the universe in respiration, being carried by the winds.¹¹⁵ This certainly depends on an old popular belief that women and animals are impregnated by the winds.¹¹⁶ This belief explains the name of the wind-egg¹¹⁷ mentioned in the Orphic cosmogony of Aristophanes. Here too there is no explicit reference to metempsychosis, but certainly this doctrine accords very well with the idea that the soul, carried by the winds, enters the body.

¹¹¹ Plato, *Phaedo*, p. 70 C, *Meno*, p. 81 A-B. ¹¹² Plato, *Resp.*, x, p. 620 A.

¹¹³ Rathmann, l.c., pp. 64. Plato, *Cratylus*, p. 400 C; cp. above p. 205, n. 88. Cp. Plato, *Gorgias*, p. 493 A.

¹¹⁴ Aristotle, *De anima*, i, 5, 15; Kern Fr. 27.

¹¹⁵ Cp. W. Kroll in *Rheinisches Museum*, lii, 1897, pp. 338.

¹¹⁶ See Riess' article "Aberglaube" in Pauly-Wissowa's *Realenc. d. class. Altertums-wiss.*, i, pp. 42; add Schol. Nicand. *Alexipharm.*, v. 560. In regard to man cp. that the *Tritopatores* are said to be wind daemons and ancestors at the same time; they appear also in Orphic literature.

¹¹⁷ See e.g. Aristotle, *Hist. anim.*, vi, 2, 5.

The verses of Pindar quoted by Plato ¹¹⁸ say of those, for whom Persephone accepts the penalty of ancient guilt, that she sends their souls up again into the sun above in the ninth year and that noble and strong kings and men greatest in wisdom arise from them; thereafter forever they are called saintly heroes by men. This is metempsychosis clear and outspoken. The famous passage in Pindar's ode to Theron ¹¹⁹ is much more detailed and difficult. Leaving the first lines aside for a moment, we hear that the good ones will carry on a life in the Other World without toil, not needing to trouble either the earth or the sea; those who were faithful to their oaths will live without tears together with the gods. The others will suffer a pain which cannot be looked upon. Those who have been able, dwelling three times in either place, to abstain from all wrong take the road by the tower of Cronos to the Islands of the Blest where the old heroes live. This also is metempsychosis. The cycle of generations comes to an end; if someone in three lives in the Upper as well as in the Nether World abstains from wrong-doing, he will finally and for ever enter the Islands of the Blest. This last-mentioned idea seems to me not so much a philosophical development of the doctrine of metempsychosis as a manner of harmonizing this doctrine with the common belief in the sojourn of the heroes in Elysium. But this idea could be invested with a deep meaning, as the blessed final release from the weary round of the cycle of births.

To return to the first lines which are most difficult. They have been interpreted variously: if someone knows the future, that the reckless minds of the dead receive their punishment here (in this world) immediately and that sins committed in this realm of Zeus are judged beneath the earth with dire necessity; or: that the feeble ¹²⁰ minds of those who died here are punished again, etc. Professor Drachmann calls attention ¹²¹ to the fact that the manuscripts have *αὐτίκα* (the usual read-

¹¹⁸ See above p. 213. Pindar, fr. 133 Bergk.

¹¹⁹ Pindar, Olymp., ii, vv. 62.

¹²⁰ The word *ἀπάλαντος* has the significance of "reckless" in Pindar. Professor Drachmann refers in a letter also to Simonides fr. 3 which is omitted by Liddell and Scott.

¹²¹ See Berliner philolog. Wochenschrift, 1901, p. 646.

ing αῦτις is an emendation), and says that this implies the conception that one may be able to commit wrong-doing in the Underworld too. That this is so appears from vv. 75 where Pindar speaks of those who are able to abstain from wrong-doing in *either* place. If this is so, the reading αὐτίκα must be kept, for the wrong-doers are immediately sent up to the Upper World. The following passage shows that even those who do nothing wrong are compelled to spend three lives in the Upper as well as in the Nether World. This interpretation is much better from a philological point of view. The referring of ἐνθάδε to θανόντων which follows from the common interpretation is very awkward; in Drachmann's interpretation it is quite naturally referred to the verb: they pay their guilt here in this world. Thus there emerges a clear contrasting parallelism between the two sentences which are by μέν - δέ made antithetic; just as the reckless souls of the dead pay their guilt in the Upper World, so sins committed in the Upper World are punished with severity in the Nether World. These reckless souls are such as do not abstain from wrong-doing in the Nether World and so are precluded from entering Elysium after three lives; they are punished in the Upper World, being sent back to it immediately. This view, although rejected by the commentators, is not quite new. In spite of Rohde's polemic it seems to be right.¹²²

Pindar says in another fragment, No. 131, that the body of all of us follows the call of strong death, but the shadow of our living self (εἰδωλον αἰῶνος) survives death, for that alone is of divine origin. It sleeps when our limbs are in busy motion; in many a dream it reveals to us things delightful or doleful. The underlying conceptions are old and well-known. The soul is a shadowy image of man. In the second sentence we recognize a current explanation of why dreams can foretell the future. When we are sleeping the soul is moving freely about. The stressing of its divine origin serves the same end, for oracles are sent by the gods and the soul, because of its divine origin,

¹²² It is accepted by others, e.g. van Essen, l.c., p. 45. Rohde, *Psyche*, ii, p. 208, n. 3; cp. Wilamowitz, *Pindaros*, p. 248, n. 1, rejecting the improbable interpretation of Deubner, *Hermes*, xliii, 1908, pp. 638.

has its power of insight into the future. But the soul must be free from the fetters of the body in order to exercise its divine power. This liberating of the soul also took place in ecstasy, and ecstatic phenomena were characteristic of the religious movements of the archaic age. Not to speak of the Dionysiac ecstasy, such miracle men as Aristaeas of Proconnesus and Hermodotimus of Clazomenae were famous. The tendency of the age was to value highly this liberation of the soul from the bonds of the body. This attitude gives the real background and explanation of the Orphic saying that the body is the tomb of the soul. For the soul sleeps when the body is awake and in action, just as the body after death is laid to sleep in the tomb. When the body is asleep, the soul is set free momentarily; when the body dies, it is set wholly free and goes to the Other World.

This reminds us of another saying of Plato¹²³ that he would not wonder if Euripides is speaking the truth when he asks: who knows whether life is death or death life? In fact we are dead. He has heard from wise men that we are now (in this life) dead and that the body is our tomb (*σῶμα-σῆμα*). In an ingenious chapter Méautis, l.c., tried to show that the Orphics reversed the usual order of existence so that to them life was death and hell, and death life and happiness. He has overstressed his point a little, but it appears that the Orphics, in contrast to common Greek ideas of life, scorned this life and attributed a higher value to the other life, so that the outcome was a parallelism of the two. The body is compared with the tomb in which the dead is laid down to sleep. This parallelism implies a transition from the Underworld to this world as well as from this world to the Underworld. Likewise, as the soul is set free when the body dies and goes to the Underworld, so it is enclosed in the tomb of the body when it turns back from the Underworld. As Pindar proves, the doctrine that the body is the tomb of the soul is so closely connected with the doctrine of metempsychosis that we must believe that the Orphics shared it.

There is in fact no early evidence directly ascribing the

¹²³ Plato, *Gorgias*, p. 492 E.

doctrine of the transmigration of the soul to the Orphics, but all probability seems to show that they knew it. How would it be possible that they did not, when it was current in their time and agreed so well with their other beliefs? In another way, through the comparison with Pindar, we have come to the same result as Rathmann, that the Orphic doctrine that the body is the tomb of the soul proves that metempsychosis was a part of their belief. For the tomb is the Underworld. It is said that Pindar's ode to Theron represents ideas which he learnt to know during his stay in Sicily and that they have nothing to do with Orphism. I am, however, unable to admit that a barrier existed between the mother country and her western colonies. There was a lively intercourse in art, poetry, letters, and religion too. Heraclitus knew of Pythagoras. The many Orphic authors and Orphic writings mentioned from Sicily and Magna Graecia cannot lightly be brushed aside; they prove at least this much — that Orphic ideas were widespread among the western Greeks. The general opinion that a centre of Orphism was found there is right. In Pindar and in Orphism we meet the same current of religious ideas; they are coherent and explain each other, and we are entitled to survey them together in order to understand the mighty religious movement of which Orphism is a part.

The most obscure problem is the origin of the doctrine of the transmigration of souls into other bodies. It has been suggested that it derives from India or from Egypt, but at this early time there was no intercourse between Greece and India and the Egyptians did not, in fact, know this idea. The reason for deriving this belief from other peoples is that metempsychosis seems to be so peculiar a conception that it appears hardly credible that it could have arisen independently in more than one place. This is not quite true. To all primitive peoples the idea is familiar that the soul of man after death enters into some animal. It is found in Greek popular belief too. Especially the snake and the bird were thought to be incarnations of the dead; and on this subject lengthy books have been written. But this fact, so often pointed out, does not solve the problem, for there is a great difference between the transmigration of the soul into

an animal and its transmigration into another human body. Even this is not unknown to primitive peoples and to the ancients. The custom that a member of the family bent over the mouth of a dying man in order to catch his soul is Roman. The custom of giving the grandfather's name to the grandson is probably an expression of the belief that the grandfather lived again in his grandson. This custom is wide-spread and common in Greece too, but it may well be asked whether its real reason was not forgotten in historical times.

Metempsychosis is not so entirely new and revolutionary as is often fancied, especially when the philosophical consequences of the doctrine are emphasized. Popular belief had some conceptions which had in them the seeds of the idea of metempsychosis, but they do not explain the rise of this idea nor its essential peculiarity, the repeated transmigration of the soul into another human body.

The soul goes to the Underworld after death, but if it is more highly esteemed than the body and even of divine origin, it is natural to ask not only where the soul goes when leaving the body but also the corresponding question, whence it comes to join the body. There is no difficulty in finding an answer. The soul dwells in the Underworld; consequently, it comes back from the Underworld and enters a new body. But this body dies, the soul goes back to the Underworld once again and so forth. The result would be an endless cycle of generations, but endlessness was not an idea favored by the Greeks and the old myths which made the pious heroes carry on a life in eternal happiness in Elysium were opposed to it. The outcome we have seen in the second Olympian ode; after three generations the pious ones come to the Islands of the Blest.

There are certainly points in popular belief which foreshadow the doctrine of metempsychosis. It put the question how the soul enters the body; one answer was that animals and women were impregnated by the winds. This belief is certainly old in origin, perhaps as old as the common belief that souls hover about in the air. Souls were, under certain circumstances, able to come back from the Underworld into the Upper World. They were the guests of the living ones at the Anthesteria and other

festivals, and the famous lekythos at Jena ¹²⁴ shows Hermes calling and dismissing souls.

The salient point is the putting of the question whence the souls came when entering the bodies. If it was put, the answer was at hand and the transmigration of souls into new bodies was the simple consequence. It seems to me that circumstances were such in the archaic age as to make the putting of the question possible and probable. We need not go outside Greece to find the origin of the doctrine of metempsychosis.

In the relative appreciation of body and soul a change of attitude is apparent. To Homer the body is the self of man and the soul a powerless shadow. In Pindar the soul is called by the same name as in Homer, *εἶδωλον*, a reminder that in the early stage of metempsychosis we must think of the soul in the old way as an almost material, shadowy image of man, not the dematerialized conception which arose in philosophy and passed into religion. But in Pindar the soul, in contrast to the body, is of divine origin and has, as a divine feature, the power of foreseeing the future. This conception of the soul was coupled with ideas peculiar to the mystics and the initiated ones. To them man was inherently impure. He could only be purified through initiations into the mysteries. The soul being divine, the impure part of man was his body, the tomb of the soul; death and tombs commonly convey impurity. Thus the value of the soul and the vileness of the body were still more emphasized. Prohibitions of certain foods and other things of various kinds always existed in ritual, especially in mystic ritual, and asceticism is dear to mystics. The idea of the soul as the divine part and the body as the impure part of man gave a deeper meaning to asceticism and prohibitions. Asceticism served to liberate the soul from the impurity of the body. The prohibitions which are a kind of asceticism served the same end. It is evident that certain of the prohibitions ascribed to the Pythagoreans concern such parts of the body as are especially the seat of life, e.g. the heart and the matrix. The prohibition of killing animals for food is a further extension and generalization. They are on the same level as the prohibition of suicide. It is man's duty

¹²⁴ Figured e.g., Harrison, *Proleg.*, p. 43, fig. 7.

to liberate his soul from the fetters of the body not by drastic methods but by patient and painful care throughout his life. As a soul may be incarnate in an animal too, he should not wilfully interrupt the course of metempsychosis by killing it.

Not only asceticism but purifications also were necessary, for the body is essentially impure and must be purified before a man can be initiated. A man may commit offences, ritual or moral; they require purifications. Purifications are easier to perform because they do not, as asceticism does, regulate the whole of life but only certain aspects of conduct. Consequently they came to take a most important place for the many who, as man's nature is, were not able to take up an ascetic life but were impressed by the mystic doctrine or afraid of the consequences of their wrong-doings. This was the opportunity for the jugglers and hangers-on of the mystic movements. They were always at hand if people wanted purifications and initiations at a small cost. Thus to the public at large the mystic initiations were much better known than the doctrines, for these practices aroused its attention, curiosity, and sometimes contempt. The books of Orpheus and Musaeus mentioned by Plato seem especially to have contained prescriptions for such sacrifices.¹²⁵ There is no need of quoting evidence for Orphic initiations; we need only refer to Plato and to the superstitious man in Theophrastus who goes monthly to the Orphic priests in order to be initiated.¹²⁶ Dieterich very ingeniously pointed out the similarity between the preparations which, according to Aristophanes, Strepsiades had to undergo when he wished to be initiated into the philosophic wisdom of Socrates and the initiations into the mysteries.¹²⁷ He is right, but I should prefer to think of private mysteries in general and not especially of the Orphic initiations.

It is self-evident that the Orphics felt themselves connected

¹²⁵ καθ' ἄς θυηπολοῦσι, above p. 207, Resp. ii, 364 E, Kern Test. 3.

¹²⁶ Theophrast, Charact., 16, 11; Kern Test. 207 τελεσθησόμενος is perhaps to be translated simply "to be purified"; cp. H. Bolkestein, Theophrastos Charakter der Deisidaimonia, Religionsgesch. Versuche und Vorarbeiten, xxi, 2, pp. 53; Guthrie, Orpheus and Greek Religion, pp. 202; Nock, Conversion, p. 28.

¹²⁷ A. Dieterich, Über eine Szene der aristophanäischen Wolken, Rhein. Museum, xlviii, 1893, pp. 275; Kleine Schriften, pp. 117.

with each other by their common mystic belief and rites, at least those of them who were in earnest. They were, to use the Greek word, *συμμύσται*. So were those who had been initiated at Eleusis. If someone was accused of a crime against the mysteries, the jury was elected only from among the initiated ones. The Orphics, however, felt themselves, because of their asceticism and purity, superior to others and these others sometimes paid it back by their contempt. Consequently the Orphics (*οἱ ἀμφὶ Ὀρφέα*, says Plato) may have become something like a sect, a *αἵρεσις*, to use a Greek word again, but Nock's remark is quite right that the Orphics did not form a stable community,¹²⁸ for a sect in this sense had not yet come into existence. On the other hand, it should not be overlooked that, unlike the common forms of Greek religion, the Orphics seem to have done without definite cult places.

The cardinal Orphic myth, the killing of the child Dionysus by the wicked Titans, is ascribed to the early age only at second-hand in the passage in Pausanias quoted above (p. 196, n. 67) where he says that this myth was related in the epics of Onomacritus. The evidence is late and may of course be doubted. We found, however, a corroboration of the early age of the myth in the Orphic saying of the Titanic nature of man quoted by Plato. Here we must add what little is known of Zagreus in the early age and try to see what will follow from it.

The earliest mention occurs in an old epic, the Alcmaeonis, from which a verse is quoted: "Mighty Earth and Zagreus, the highest of all gods."¹²⁹ It is probably significant that Earth and Zagreus are mentioned together, for in Aeschylus Zagreus is a god of the Underworld. Lexicographers give the information that this poet in his play, *Sisyphus*, called Zagreus a son of Hades, and in another play, the *Egyptians*, called him Pluto.¹³⁰ So much is certain — that Zagreus was a god of the Underworld. The lexicographers explain the name etymologically as "the Great Hunter" (*ὁ μέγας ἀγρεύων*). If this ety-

¹²⁸ Nock, *Conversion*, pp. 28.

¹²⁹ *Fragmenta epicorum graecorum*, ed. Kinkel, fr. 3.

¹³⁰ *Anecdota Oxon.*, ii, p. 443; *Etymol. Gud.*, p. 227, 41; Aeschylus, fr. 5 and 228 Nauck.

mology is right, one may be tempted to think of such a figure as the Charos of modern Greek popular belief, who is thought of as a hunter riding a black horse and stringing up his prey at his saddle. But it will be wise to mention this modern analogy with reserve.

Another mention of Zagreus is a passage in the Cretans of Euripides (fr. 472), which is frequently adduced as an important piece of evidence for Orphism but which I have avoided quoting, because it offers a mixture of all kinds of mystic cults: the Cretan Zeus, the Great Mother, and Bacchus. It is a piece of early poetical syncretism and it is difficult, in fact hopeless, to try to discern what of it is Orphic. The speakers, the chorus of the play, call themselves at one time mystae of the Idaean Zeus and Bacchantes. The words which concern us here run: "since I have performed the thunders, the meals of raw meat of Zagreus roaming by night." The text seems to be corrupt for the word "thunders" or "lightnings" (*βροντάς*) is inexplicable. Of the various conjectures that of Diels *βουτάς*, "herdsman," gives a good sense: "being the herdsman of Zagreus, roaming by night, I have performed the meals of raw meat," but it is, of course, uncertain.¹³¹ Zagreus is, however, here represented as another Dionysus; the cult referred to him is the common Dionysiac orgia characterized by the roaming about by night and the eating of raw pieces of animals torn asunder. This passage is important for our purpose in so far as it proves the identification of Zagreus and Dionysus in the fifth century B.C.

The salient point is how the identification of Dionysus with the Lord of the Underworld came about. It is known from Heraclitus who said that Hades and Dionysus are the same, for whom they celebrate the raging Bacchic rites.¹³² The thesis of Rohde that the belief in immortality of the soul came from Thrace to Greece with the ecstatic Bacchic orgia is not proved or accepted nowadays. Nor is it probable that from his origin Dionysus was the Lord of souls or of the dead. His connection with souls came from the fact that certain festivals in spring-

¹³¹ Cp. Harrison, *Proleg.*, p. 480, n. 1.

¹³² Heraclitus, Diels, *Fragm. d. Vorsokratiker*, 3rd ed., fr. 15, *ὡν τὸς δὲ Ἀΐδης καὶ Διόνυσος ὅτε μάλινονται καὶ ληναλίσουσιν*. *Ληναλίζω* from *λήνη* Bacchant.

time, during which the souls went back to their old abodes for a day or two, such as the Anthesteria and the Agrionia, were attached to the feasts of Dionysus in this season.¹³³ We never find Dionysus as the Lord of the Underworld as Zagreus is said to be. On the other hand, we know that as early as the beginning of the fifth century B.C. those who were initiated in the Bacchic mysteries had a separate burial place and consequently expected a happy after life. At least they seem to have done so in Southern Italy.¹³⁴

I see no other explanation of these facts than that which may be deduced from the cardinal Orphic myth about Dionysus-Zagreus. In this myth Dionysus is killed and dismembered by the wicked Titans. The analogy with the Egyptian myth of the dismembering of Osiris is apparent and noticed by others and most recently by Wilamowitz.¹³⁵ He thinks of course that the borrowing took place in the Hellenistic age, but if there was a borrowing, I do not see why it cannot have taken place in the sixth century B.C. in which many Greeks came to Egypt as merchants and mercenaries and could not avoid noticing the most prominent features of the Egyptian cult of the dead. This is the same age in which the Greeks received the impulse to their statuary art from Egypt and borrowed the cult of Adonis from the Semitic Orient. But it is unnecessary and, moreover, hardly the part of caution to assume an Egyptian origin of the myth of the child Dionysus-Zagreus, the elements being found in Greece itself. The analogy ceases with the simple fact of the dismembering. Osiris was restored to life again but in the Nether World and there he ruled as its Lord. Dionysus was called back to life again but in the Upper World; he is the Dionysus of common belief.

Dionysus was the central figure of Orphic mythology. The happy life in the Underworld was a central idea of Orphism. By his death Dionysus went down to the Underworld. Thus

¹³³ Cp. my *Griechische Feste*, pp. 271.

¹³⁴ I refer to the well-known inscription from Cumae, figured e.g. in Cumont, *Les religions orientales dans le paganisme romain*, 4th ed., p. 197. The interpretation preferred by Conway, l.c., p. 33, n. 1, seems to me not to be acceptable. The difference is of less importance to our purpose.

¹³⁵ Wilamowitz, *Glaube d. Hell.*, ii, pp. 378.

it was possible to identify him with the Lord of the Underworld, Zagreus, a name which did not convey the old ideas connected with Hades, and thus was suited to the new doctrine of the other life. Dionysus was restored to life again, a kind of metempsychosis, though in a very crude form, reminiscent of certain folk-tale motifs.

Now, we must come back to the only early Orphic poem or poems of whose contents we are able to get any idea, the cosmogony or theogony, which is quoted by Plato, referred to by Isocrates, and parodied by Aristophanes. One of the verses quoted by Plato¹³⁶ is extremely important, for it proves that the poem recognized six ages or generations and came to an end with the sixth. We are justified in supposing that these were not the ages in Hesiod's *Works and Days*, called by the names of metals, but generations of gods. The stories how Cronos mutilated his father and Zeus dethroned and imprisoned Cronos were told in it. It had a still greater propensity than Hesiod for strange and uncanny myths. Of this kind is the story of the dismembering of the child Dionysus by the Titans. This is the chief and fundamental event of the last generation, which we may call the age of Dionysus or the Orphic age, the age in which the Orphics lived and spread their ideas, in which they hoped by virtue of their initiations to make men better in this life and happier in another life, to free them from their Titanic nature.

The myth that man was formed from the ashes of the slain Titans cannot be separated from the myth of the dismemberment of Dionysus, though in early times it is only hinted at in the saying of man's Titanic nature. It is the basis of the Orphic doctrine of man's nature, his innate wickedness and need of purification. Even this myth has its prototype in a tale of Hesiod's, how the woman was formed of clay and endowed by the gods with beauty and wickedness. The Orphic myth is perhaps cruder but has a much deeper meaning and, above all, it has the right place as the crowning end of the cosmogony. The creation of the woman was for Hesiod and mythology in general one myth among others. The Orphic myth of the crea-

¹³⁶ See above, p. 200, n. 78.

tion of man has become an anthropogony in the full sense of the word, intrinsically and logically connected with the theogony as its final event. Beginning with Chaos and ending with the creation of man the cosmogony is rounded off into a systematic whole which has not only a mythical but also a religious meaning. Its final aim is not to relate tales of the world and of the gods, but to explain the composite nature of man and his fate. It explains the doubleness of man's nature and teaches that he has to tame his Titanic part through purifications, asceticism, and righteousness, in order that his divine part, his soul, may deserve happiness in the Other Life.

Finally a few words must be added on an aspect of Orphism to which much weight was attached recently by A. Krüger, namely sun-worship.¹³⁷ The source is *prima facie* a very excellent one, the tragedy of Aeschylus, the *Bassarai*, which was treated above (p. 190). The reason of Dionysus' hatred against Orpheus was that Orpheus did not pay reverence to Dionysus but considered Helios, whom he also called Apollo, as the greatest of the gods. He rose in the night, went to Mt. Pangaeum where he awaited the sunrise in order to be the first to see the sun. In consequence of this Dionysus became infuriated and sent the *Bassarides*, as the poet Aeschylus says, who tore him into pieces, etc. So it is related in the *Catasterismi* of Pseudo-Eratosthenes. The crucial question is how much of this is taken from the play of Aeschylus, for some parts not quoted here are evidently later adaptations. Aeschylus is quoted for the fact that Dionysus sent the *Bassarides* who tore Orpheus into pieces. Professor Linforth has cast doubt on the common supposition that the alleged reason of Dionysus' wrath, the sun-worship of Orpheus, also belongs to the quotation from Aeschylus¹³⁸ and his arguments seem to be very good. It would, however, perhaps not be cautious to dismiss the story of Orpheus' sun-worship with this reference; it must be examined.

It is astonishing, for there is no sign of sun-worship in Orphism, neither in early nor in late sources. The reasons by which

¹³⁷ Krüger, l.c., pp. 30.

¹³⁸ I. M. Linforth, Orpheus in the *Bassarides* of Aeschylus, *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, lxii, 1931, pp. 11.

Krüger tries to demonstrate it are unsatisfactory.¹³⁹ Phanes was never called a sun-god, not even in the late age when all gods were mixed up and identified in an all-comprising syncretism.¹⁴⁰ It is well known that the sun-god played an insignificant part in classical Greece and that his cult was considered as being proper to barbarians. When Sophocles says (fr. 1017), that wise men call Helios the parent of the gods and the father of all, these wise men (*οἱ σοφοί*) are of course philosophers, not Orphics. The same opinion is quoted by Aristotle and it occurs again in the Atthidographer Philochorus.¹⁴¹ The latter said that the Tritopatores were born first of all and that the people who lived then knew that the Earth and the Sun, who also is called Apollo, were their parents and these (viz. the Tritopatores) the third ancestors. In the same article in Suidas we read that another Atthidographer, Demon, said that the Tritopatores were wind daemons.¹⁴² This is evidently a learned cosmological hypothesis and no popular belief. I cannot see that the narrative in Aeschylus can be explained from Greek religion except by the greeting of the sun at sunrise, which was a well-known Greek custom but implied no cult.¹⁴³

We have to turn to another fragment of Sophocles¹⁴⁴ in which Helios is invoked as the light most revered by the horse-loving Thracians. The prominent place of the sun-god in Thracian religion is corroborated by other evidence.¹⁴⁵ The Paeonians e.g. worshipped Helios in the form of a disc attached to a staff.¹⁴⁶ As Orpheus, like many other singers and even the Muses, was made a Thracian and the stage of the play was Thrace, Aeschylus, or more probably the author of the version given in Pseudo-Eratosthenes, seized upon the Thracian cult of the sun-god as the reason of Dionysus' enmity against

¹³⁹ See also above p. 199, n. 76.

¹⁴⁰ Except by Macrobius, *Sat.*, i, 18, 12; Kern Test. 237.

¹⁴¹ Aristotle, *De anim. gener.*, i, 2. Suidas, s.v. *Τριτοπάτορες*.

¹⁴² Cp. above, p. 213, n. 116.

¹⁴³ See my paper *Sonnenkalender und Sonnenreligion*, *Archiv. für Religionswissenschaft*, xxx, 1933, pp. 142.

¹⁴⁴ Sophocles, *Tereus*, fr. 523 Nauck.

¹⁴⁵ Kazarow in *Cambridge Ancient History*, viii, p. 548.

¹⁴⁶ Maximus Tyrius, 33.

Orpheus. For it is hardly probable that they knew anything of the real reason for the hatred between the adherents of Orpheus and those of Dionysus. It belonged to a past age and it may even be doubted if it ever was recognized and outspoken.

I am unable to attribute to this tradition any importance for the history of Orphism. It is at variance with all that we know concerning Orphism, even in late times, and it is most probably an invention derived from local Thracian cult.

To conclude we may sum up the results of our inquiry concerning early Orphism. They may perhaps appear meagre, perhaps even incoherent, and perhaps not very new. If they are meagre this depends on the scarcity of the materials at our disposal from the early times before Alexander the Great, and on our principle of not supplementing these materials with later ones which may vitiate the issue. If they are incoherent this may be said to depend on the fragmentary state of our evidence but probably not only on this. The systematization of a religious creed is always a phenomenon of later date, appearing when people begin to speculate on their beliefs and to coördinate them. Religion, even the religion of prophets, does not pay much heed to contradictions; a living religion tolerates not a little of this kind, being intent on such leading ideas as are of actual importance and leaving the harmonizing of incoherent and contradictory elements to a later age which takes more interest in logical and systematic niceties than in practical religious life and propaganda. Leading ideas are essential to every religious reform and the leading ideas of Orphism appear clearly. If the results are not very new but in certain chief respects agree with the prevailing views on Orphism our inquiry may not have been superfluous. The ground for our judgment of Orphism will be safer and firmer. The important rôle attributed to Orphism in the religious development of the early age of Greece is proved on the whole to be right and the attempts to deny this not to have been successful, even if certain modifications of the common opinion must be made.

In this respect attention may be called to a fact which has been hitherto somewhat neglected and obscured by the effort to organize a system of Orphic doctrines and to emphasize the

revolution in Greek religion and thought caused by the new Orphic ideas. I mean the other side of the appearance of Orphism, its dependence on earlier myths and literature and its connexion with ideas widely current in the early Greek age, even outside Orphic circles. The dependence on earlier literature is conspicuous with regard to the only Orphic poem or poems of which we are able to form some idea, the *Theogony*. It incorporated the old cosmogonic myths, some of which were known to Homer and which are especially prominent in Hesiod. The far-reaching importance of the Hesiodic poems for the spiritual and religious life of early Greece emerges very clearly. His *Theogony* was the prototype of the Orphic *Theogony* which enlarged and reshaped it. His scheme of the Ages of the World was the basis of the Orphic scheme of the six generations of gods, though it was a thorough remodelling, probably introducing the generations of the gods from current mythology and adding something of its own. His craving for justice became the leading principle of Orphism; it kept the time-honored idea of retribution in this life and extended it to its picture of man's life in the other world. The Orphic rules of abstinence are akin, although less clearly akin, to the superstitious rules incorporated into the *Works of Hesiod*.¹⁴⁷ They are part of that legalism which was protected and fostered by Apollo at Delphi and which shares with mysticism the foreground of religious development in the early age. It is not astonishing that Orpheus was connected with Apollo. He is akin to him not only through his music but also by his emphasizing of the need of purifications and righteousness.

Thus Orphism has its roots in ancient ideas and beliefs; it waxed and thrived on old ground. It is not isolated but closely connected with contemporary movements of religious ideas. In fact, it is a part of them. The Orphics shared with others the belief in metempsychosis and in punishments and rewards in the Nether World; they shared the underlying concept of

¹⁴⁷ The symbols of the Pythagoreans are much more kindred to the maxims of Hesiod; see F. Boehm, *De symbolis Pythagoreis*, Dissertation, Berlin, 1905. The Orphics generalized these prohibitions and gave an ethical and religious meaning to them.

retributive justice, a powerful idea in an age of social wrongs and distress. The combination of religious guilt, viz. the contempt of the initiations in the mysteries, and moral guilt, lying in bad actions, was in no wise peculiar to Orphism, and we find it even in the Eleusinian mysteries. A mythical cosmology was old; it was developed further by others too, e.g. by Pherecydes of Syros, but it took a philosophical turn with them.

Thus Orphism may seem to be less original than is often asserted. It represented no absolute break with popular belief and old traditions but continued and developed them in its own way. It may seem that in part its peculiarity is to be found in the accent more than in the text, in the manner in which the Orphics brought forth, put together, and emphasized ideas which were found among others too. They expounded the text according to their leanings and composed comprehensive poems as propaganda for their ideas. This is a fact which emerges clearly and proves the part played by Orphism in the religious movements of the early age. The second fact of a like order is that the Orphics emphasized and made use of the practical consequences of these ideas. The religious guilt of neglecting the initiations and the moral guilt of committing bad actions conveyed impurity. The Orphics emphasized the necessity of initiations and of abstinence from certain actions and moral guilt; they professed to be able to make man clean from guilt and impurity and they even made a profession of their purifications. It reminds one curiously of certain catholic doctrines that they professed that their initiations were able to save those too who were already suffering their punishments in the Underworld.

There seems, however, to be one point in which the Orphics are profoundly original, although the premises are found elsewhere too, the idea that the body is the tomb of the soul, implying a new valuation of this life as compared with the other life. It was a complete break with Homeric traditions, but the way had been prepared by certain ideas set forth above. The merit of the Orphics is that they formulated the new idea sharply and did not shrink from the implications of its logical consequences.

With the conception of the fate of the soul the Orphic myth of the creation of man is closely linked, although the two ideas are logically inconsistent. This is the other great product of Orphic religious thinking. Others had composed theogonies. With Pherecydes and Empedocles they took a philosophical turn explaining the origin and the structure of the world; with the Orphics cosmogony became theological in the modern sense of the word, giving the reason for man's sinful nature and laying the foundation of its doctrine of man's double nature and the soul's possibility of escape from the prison of the body. Whilst other cosmogonies were a theology in the ancient sense of the word, i.e., a narrative of the gods and their deeds, the Orphics added as the final event of cosmogony an anthropology in the religious sense of this word. They made man in his composite nature and his need of being freed from the fetters of the body the centre of their religious thinking. And this is sufficient basis for the assertion that Orphism is the creation of a religious genius.¹⁴⁸

So I venture to think that a close inquiry into the testimonies derived from archaic and classical times proves that the words still hold good which I wrote many years ago:¹⁴⁹ "Orphism is the combination and the crown of the manifold religious movements of the archaic period. The development of the cosmogony in a speculative direction, with the addition of an anthropogony which laid the principal emphasis on the explanation of the mixture of good and evil in human nature: the legalism of ritual and life; the mysticism of cult and doctrine; the development of the other life into concrete visibility, and the transformation of the lower world into a place of punishment by the adaptation of the demand for retribution to the old idea that the hereafter is repetition of the present; the belief in the happier lot of the purified and initiated; — for all these things parallels, or at least suggestions, can be found in other quarters. The greatness of Orphism lies in having combined all this into a system, and in the incontestable originality which made the individual in his relationship to guilt and retribution the centre of its teaching."

¹⁴⁸ See my *Minoan-Mycenaean Religion*, p. 511.

¹⁴⁹ In my *History of Greek Religion*, pp. 222.

NOTES

THE CAESAREAN TEXT OF MATTHEW AND LUKE

IN THE January Number of the Harvard Theological Review, Mr. R. V. G. Tasker presents an interesting survey of the quotations from Matthew and Luke in the *Demonstratio Evangelica* of Eusebius. He concludes that "the evidence does not allow us to say that the text of Fam. Θ was the text used by Eusebius for Matthew at Caesarea." I proceed to show that this conclusion is the exact opposite of that to which the evidence actually points.

But first I must point out certain inaccuracies in Mr. Tasker's statement of the evidence, which suggest that he has worked a little hastily. He says, for example, "Out of 69 variant readings, 24 are peculiar"; actually the number of the variants which he prints amounts to 72, of which 26 (on the evidence as stated) appear to be peculiar to Eusebius. Indeed, the number should be 73; for in Mt. xxiii.35 the omission of τοῦ before αἵματος occurs twice; on one occasion Θ supports Eusebius, on the other he is supported by fam. 1. I note also three cases (Mt. xiii. 10, xxvii. 4, xxvii. 10) in which the evidence of members of fam. 1 or fam. 13 which support Eusebius is *not* adduced; thus the blank in the appropriate column wrongly implies that he has no support from MSS. of the Caesarean text. In Mt. xxvi. 21, the reading of Θ is a half-way house between that of Eusebius and that of all other MSS., and may therefore be counted as giving him qualified support. In xiii. 10 and xxvii.51 a reading of Eusebius is supported by members of fam. 1424 (called by Soden I^φ), which in my book *The Four Gospels* (p. 577 f.) I showed to belong to Fam. Θ.

There are a couple of important slips where the readings of other MSS. — in Mt. xiv.28, **Σ** B and D, and in Mt. xxi.9 B C and D — are quoted on the opposite side to that which they actually support. Accepting Mr. Tasker's statement of the rest of the evidence as correct, and his opinion that most, if not all, of the peculiar readings are slips of memory, the salient facts which emerge are as follows: —

Of the 47 readings for which MS. attestation is quoted, 41 definitely (and 1 partially) are readings found in one or more members of Fam. Θ, whereas only 25 occur in D, 24 in **Σ**, and only 18 in B. That is to say, so far as this set of quotations of Eusebius is concerned, we have

exactly the same phenomenon as Professor Lake (and Mr. Tasker himself in J. T. S. for January 1935) have shown to hold in the quotations of Mark made by Origen in certain of his works. Origen in the one case and Eusebius in the other are steadily supported by the *non-Byzantine* readings in this group of MSS., whereas **Σ**, B, and D chop and change about, being alternately in support or in opposition. The same phenomenon is seen in the chapters of Origen's commentary on Matthew examined in Appendix III of my book *The Four Gospels*.

The figures quoted above are so conclusive that the reader may well ask how Mr. Tasker could possibly have derived from them the conclusion which he did. The answer is that he seems for the moment to have fallen into the error of supposing that any and all readings found in the group of MSS., conveniently known as "Fam. Θ," are readings of the Caesarean text. All the MSS. which preserve readings of this text have been heavily corrected to accord with what Griesbach called the "Byzantine," Hort and others the "Syrian" or "Antiochian" text; but the different MSS. have been so corrected in different places. Accordingly it is only when MSS. of this family differ from the Byzantine text that we can identify their readings as authentically representing the characteristic family text. Hence the column in Mr. Tasker's statement of the evidence headed "Members of Fam. Θ in opposition" is not only irrelevant but positively misleading. Opposition so described is only relevant where members of this family differ from one another *in a non-Byzantine reading*. I have verified the readings of Θ which he here quotes, and in every case Θ has the Byzantine reading and therefore ceases to be evidence for Fam. Θ. Thus the heading of this column simply throws dust in the eyes of the reader — and apparently of the writer also.

I must also protest against the heading "Neutrals in support" given to another column of his tables. Westcott and Hort coined the name "Neutral" in order to distinguish the characteristic text of B, not only from the "Western," but also from the "Alexandrian" text which they found in **Σ**, C, L, 33 (in Lk. **Ξ**) when any of these differ from B (when B has any decent support) in other than markedly Western readings. Now in Mr. Tasker's tables of Matthew and Luke there are no less than nine cases (ten, if he had not omitted the evidence of C for Lk. i. 26) where the evidence of one or more of these MSS. is quoted in support of Eusebius *in cases where B* (with good support) *is on the other side*, as well as three cases where **Σ** goes against all the usual "Neutral" MSS. Westcott and Hort would have hotly repudiated the ascription of the term "Neutral" to a collection of

readings of which a large proportion was (in their use of the term) "Alexandrian."

The point is not merely verbal. The readings of Eusebius quoted are seen to include a *particular selection* from each of Hort's three "pre-Syrian" texts; and it is *this precise selection* which is found when we note the non-Byzantine readings of Fam. Θ. This observation clinches the evidence for the view that these residual readings represent a definite type of text and that this was used by Eusebius.

Only a small proportion of the readings of the "Caesarean text" — perhaps not more than 10 % or 15 % — are peculiar to itself though among these are some of great interest, as for example the reading in Mt. xxvii. 17, which gives the name Jesus to Barabbas. Others are of special interest as giving readings which are found in the Old Syriac, Armenian and Georgian, but have no other attestation in Greek. The great majority of "Caesarean" readings are to be found either in Hort's "Neutral" or in his "Alexandrian" texts or in the "Western" (D and the Old Latin). The same thing holds of the Byzantine text. The majority of its readings are to be found either in the "Neutral" or in the "Alexandrian" or in the "Western" text. But the particular selection of Neutral, Alexandrian and Western readings in the Byzantine text is totally different from the selection in the Caesarean text. What constitutes the characteristic feature of both these texts is not so much the relatively small proportion of readings peculiar to themselves as the specific *pattern*, so to speak, in which Neutral, Alexandrian and Western readings are found combined. These respective patterns are for each text practically stable in all representative MSS. Westcott and Hort explained the pattern in the Byzantine text (doubtless correctly) on the theory that it represents a selection from earlier texts deliberately made by an editor — probably Lucian of Antioch. The pattern of the Caesarean text *may* represent the quite different selection made by some editor *earlier than Origen*; but the possibility must also be explored that it *may* represent something like the base from which Neutral, Alexandrian and Western originally developed.

I come now to Mr. Tasker's table and discussion of readings of Luke found in the *Demonstratio Evangelica*. Here also the table is misleading since he omits to mention members of fam. 13 which support the reading of Eusebius in Lk. i. 26, i. 70, xxiii. 35 (by a slip the reference figures are omitted here) and xxiv. 1. Adding these to the table, and assuming the correctness of the other evidence as given, we get the following results: —

Of 23 readings, 4 are peculiar to Eusebius, and are probably mere slips of memory. Of the remaining 19, 17 have Caesarean support, while in the case of the other two, being Byzantine readings, we do not know what the Caesarean reading was. Of the 19 readings, 14 occur in B and 17 in \aleph . It is notable that here, as in the selection of readings from Matthew quoted above, \aleph is nearer than B to the Θ family. If, as Hort holds, B is the type MS. of the Neutral text, it would look as if the text of Eusebius in Luke was that of Fam. Θ , but that an ancestor of \aleph has been crossed by a MS. of the Caesarean text. It is possible that the Caesarean text has in Luke a smaller Western element than in Matthew and Mark. But this *may* be only an appearance resulting from the fact that in Luke our best authorities for the Caesarean text are, not Θ or 700, but fam. 1 and fam. 13. As I have pointed out elsewhere (*The Four Gospels*, p. 86), it so happens that in fam. 1 and fam. 13 the Byzantine revisers have spared a slightly larger proportion of Neutral than Western readings; in 565 and 700 the opposite has occurred. This point may turn out to be of importance in any investigation of relation to Fam. Θ of the Chester Beatty text in Luke.

It is worth while in this connection to remark on the varying value of our authorities for reconstructing the Caesarean text in different Gospels. For Mark we are fairly well off; for in this Gospel 565 has suffered less by Byzantine revision than any other MS.; we have 28 and, for two-thirds of the Gospel, there is W. In the other Gospels, 565 and 28 have very few Caesarean readings, and W still fewer. In Matthew, Θ — as Mr. Tasker points out — has been assimilated to the Textus Receptus to a greater extent than in Mark. When we get on to Luke and John we are in a still worse case. The Byzantine revisers of both Θ and 700 seem to have gradually warmed to their work about half-way through Luke, and still more so when they got on to John; so for these Gospels we are principally dependent on fam. 1 and fam. 13. In Mark our materials are sufficiently abundant and diversified to encourage the hope that we can approximate to a reconstruction of the Caesarean text throughout the Gospel; it is therefore of special note that the Chester Beatty papyrus presents a text of Mark which, as Dr. Kenyon points out, is substantially Caesarean. It is not identical in all points with the text which would result from subtracting the Byzantine readings from the members of Fam. Θ that survive; but, so far as I have had time to look into the matter, it appears to differ from such a text very little (if at all) more than the text of \aleph does from that of B. The discovery of this papyrus is thus a dramatic vindication of the critical methods by which it is attempted to reconstruct this text.

Unfortunately hardly anything of Matthew survives in the Chester Beatty Gospels; but the fact that, in the quotations of Eusebius from Matthew which Mr. Tasker has set out, more than 41 out of 47 have support in surviving MSS. of Fam. Θ, encourages the critic to go forward, since it suggests that the evidence that we have is more reliable than we might have dared to expect.

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